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BY

JOHN M. MacKinnon ROBERTSON.

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LONDON:
A. & H. B. BONNER, 1 & 2 TOOK'S COURT,
CHANCERY LANE, E.C.
1898.

2s. 6d.

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CHRIST AND KRISHNA.

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JOHN M.ackinnon ROBERTSON.

LONDON:
FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
63 FLEET STREET, E.C.

1889.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ANNIE BESANT AND CHARLES BRADLAUGH,
63 FLEET STREET, E.C.

CHRIST AND KRISHNA.

I.

Some recent English discussion as to the historic relation of the Christ myth and the Krishna myth would seem to make desirable a judicial and yet popular[1] investigation of the subject, from the rationalist point of view. By the rationalist point of view, I mean the attitude of disbelief in the supernatural claims of all religions alike — a point of view from which, of course, the question of the miraculous origin of Christianity is already disposed of. The falsity of the bases of that creed has been directly demonstrated a hundred times, and, for those not yet convinced, may be demonstrated again by old and new arguments; and it would merely overload a discussion in comparative mythology to prove in full, by way of preamble, what is properly to be proved by several other lines of inquiry as well. What is now in hand is a question of priority of myth forms. No possible result of the inquiry can alter the general rationalist standpoint; and therefore it would be the more irrelevant

[1] The object being to put the results of scholarship within the reach of ordinary readers, and the writer being no Sanskritist, no pretence is made of indicating the values of Sanskrit consonants, as is done in specialist treatises. To the general reader these indications are useless, though vowel accents may not be altogether so. On this head it should be noted that the vowels in Indian names are to be pronounced in the Continental and not in the English manner. That is to say, the names Indra, Krishna, Gita, Veda, Purana, Siva, Rama, are to be pronounced Eendra, Kreeshna, Gheetah, Vehda, Poorahna, Seeva, Rahma. The "a", long or short, is always to be sounded as in "art" or "at", never as in "hate". The long sound is now commonly indicated by a circumflex.

to put that standpoint here in discussion. Some Freethinkers have, in my opinion, gone astray over the problem under notice, making errors of assumption and errors of inference in the course of an attempt to settle priority in a particular way; but the detection of these errors does not even settle the point of priority, much less affect the comparative principle. If, indeed, it were conclusively proved to-morrow that the Krishna cult in India is in every detail long subsequent in origin to the Christian; nay, even if it were fully proved to be substantially borrowed from that, the question of the truth of Christianity would in no sense be reopened for the rationalist.

And here I would point out that, while the Freethinker, like everybody else, is fallible, it is only he, of the two main disputants in this controversy, who can really be impartial, and so do real critical service. Inasmuch as he is discussing, not the truth of any religion, but the question which religion first developed certain beliefs, he is free to reason justly on the historical data, and so *may* arrive at just conclusions. Rationalists — Freethinkers — are divided on the historical issue, partly because of the uncertainty of the evidence, partly because of differences or oversights of logical method. But in the case of the disputant who sets out with a belief in the truth of the Christian religion, miracles and all, impartiality is impossible. He holds his own religion to be supernatural and true, and every other to be merely human and false, in so far as it makes supernatural claims. Thus for him every question is as far as possible decided beforehand. He is overwhelmingly biassed to the view that any "myth" which resembles a Christian "record" is borrowed from that; and if, in some instances, he repels that conclusion, it is still for an *à priori* theological reason, as we shall see in the sequel, and not for simple historical reasons. Jesus having been *really* born of a virgin, and the New Testament teaching having been *really* inspired, any other story of a virgin-born demi-god is to be presumed posterior to Pontius Pilate, and any morality which coincides with the Christian is to be presumed an "echo" of that, because otherwise revelation would be cheapened. In the palmy days, when the Apostolic atmosphere was almost unpolluted, the Christian saw in myths which had confessedly *anticipated* his narratives, devices of the evil Spirit. To-day, the

evil Spirit being partly disestablished, this explanation is not officially recognised; and the anticipatory myths of ancient paganism are simply kept out of sight; while as many other myths as possible are sought to be made out post-Christian and therefore borrowed. In this attitude the Christian Church is practically at one. Now, no sound critical result can ever be arrived at on these lines. No conclusion so reached can really strengthen the Christian position, because that position was one of the premises. Christianity remains to be proved all the same. The Freethinker, one says, *may* reason viciously, *may* reach the truth: the believing Christian *must* in such a matter reason viciously, and *can* only add commentary to dogma. But whereas the rationalist inquiry is in this connexion logically free of presuppositions, any permanent results it attains are pure gain to human science; and must finally strengthen the rationalist position if that position be really scientific.

II.

We wish to know, then, whether the Krishna myth or legend is in whole or in part borrowed from the Christ myth or Jesus legend, or *vice versa*. The alternative terms myth or legend, implying respectively the absence and the presence of some personal basis or nucleus for the legends of the Hindu and Christian Incarnations, leave us quite free in our treatment of the historic facts—free, that is, under the restrictions of scientific principle and logical law.

This special question of priority is one which has long been before scholars. In Balfour's "Cyclopædia of India", in the article "Krishna"—a somewhat rambling and ill-digested compilation—it is stated that "since the middle of the nineteenth century, several learned men have formed the opinion that some of the legends relating to Krishna have been taken from the life of Jesus Christ. Major Cunningham believes that the worship of Krishna is only a corrupt mixture of Buddhism and Christianity, and was a sort of compromise intended for the subversion of both religions in India," etc. In point of fact, the theory is much older than the middle of this century, as is pointed

out by Professor Albrecht Weber, in his exhaustive study of the Krishna Birth-Festival,[1] referred to in the "Cyclopædia" article. As early as 1762, Father Georgi, in his "Alphabetum Tibetanum",[2] discussed the question at length, founding even then on two previous writers, one Father Cassianus Maceratensis, the other the French orientalist, De Guignes (the elder). All three held that the name "Krisna" was only *nomen ipsum corruptum Christi Servatoris*, a corruption of the very name of the Savior Christ, whose deeds had been impiously debased by inexpressibly wicked impostors. The narratives, Georgi held, had been got from the *apocryphis libris de rebus Christi Jesu*, especially from the writings of the Manichæans. But his theory did not end there. The Indian epic names Ayodhya, Yudhishthira, Yadava, he declared to be derived from the scriptural Judah; the geographical name Gomati from Gethsemane; the name Arjuna from John, Durvasas from Peter, and so on.

But long before Georgi, the English Orientalist Hyde,[3] and long before Hyde, Postel,[4] (1552) had declared the name of Brahma to be a corruption of Abraham—a view which appears to have been common among Mohammedans;[5] and Catholic missionaries early expounded this discovery amongst the Hindus, adding that the name of the female deity Saraswati was only a corruption of Sarah.[6] Other propagandists, again, scandalised Sir William Jones by assuring the Hindus that they were "almost Christians,

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[1] "Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî (Krishna's Geburtsfest)" in *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1867. Translated piecemeal in *Indian Antiquary*, iii, vi, (1874–7).

[2] Rome, 1762, pp. 253-263, cited by Weber, p. 311.

[3] "Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum," 1700, p. 31.

[4] In his commentary on "Abrahami Patriarchæ liber Jesirah", cited by Maurice, "Indian Antiquities", 1793, etc., ii, 322 (should be 382—paging twice doubled).

[5] Maurice, as cited, p. 323 (383). It may very well be, of course, that there is an old connexion between the Abraham myth and the religion of India. It has been pointed out ("Bible Folk Lore," 1884, pp. 25, 110) that Abraham's oak compares with Brahma's tree. The absurdity lies in the assumption that Brahmanism derives from the Hebrew Scriptures.

[6] Moor's "Hindu Pantheon", 1810, p. 130. "Writers are found to identify Buddha with the prophet Daniel" (H. H. Wilson, Works, ii, 317).

because their Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesa were no other than the Christian Trinity";[1] and Sir William's shocked protest did not hinder his disciple, the Rev. Thomas Maurice, from speaking of the "almost Christian theology" of Brahmanism;[2] Maurice's general contention being that the Indian and all other Triad systems were vestiges of an original pure revelation.[3] Nor was this all. As early as 1672 the Dutch missionary and trader Balde (Baldæus)[4] maintained a number of the propositions supported in our own generation by Professor Weber (who does not refer to him), namely, the derivation of parts of the Krishna myth from the Christian stories of the birth of Jesus, the massacre of the innocents,[5] etc.

Following this line of thought, Sir William Jones in 1788 suggested that "the spurious gospels which abounded in the first ages of Christianity had been brought to India, and the wildest part of them repeated to the Hindus, who ingrafted them on the old fable of Cesava, the Apollo of Greece";[6] this after the statement: "That the name of Crishna, and the general outline of his story, were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer, we know very certainly".[7] And in the same treatise ("On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India") the scholar took occasion to announce that "the adamantine pillars of our Christian faith" could not be "moved by the result of any debates on the comparative antiquity of the Hindus and Egyptians, or of any inquiries into the Indian theology".[8] Still

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[1] "On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India": in "Asiatic Researches," i, 272.

[2] "Ind. Ant.," ii, 325.

[3] *Id.*, *ib.*, and v, 785, 806, etc. The Rajputs, says the Portuguese historian De Faria y Sousa (17th cent.), "acknowledge one God in three persons, and worship the Blessed Virgin, a doctrine which they have preserved ever since the time of the apostles" (Kerr's "Collection of Voyages", 1812, vi, 228).

[4] An English translation of his work on Ceylon, etc., was published last century in Churchill's collection of travels, vol. 3.

[5] Cited by Maurice, "History of Hindostan," 1798, ii, 330, *note*.

[6] "Asiatic Researches," i, 274.

[7] *Id.*, p. 273.

[8] In the same spirit, Maurice constantly aims at repelling the criticisms of Volney and other sceptics, always begging the question, and resenting its being raised.

later, the French Orientalist Polier, seeing in the Hebrew Scriptures the earliest of all religious lore, decided that the triumph of Krishna over the serpent Kaliya (whose head he is represented crushing under his foot, and which at times, on the other hand, is seen biting his heel) was "a travesty of the tradition of the serpent-tempter who introduced death into the world, and whose head the savior of mankind was to crush".[1] These writers had of course taken it for granted that all heathen resemblances to Jewish and Christian stories must be the result of imitation; but on equally *à priori* grounds other Christian writers argued that the "impure" cult of Krishna could never have been derived from Christianity; and the view spread that the Indian myths were of much greater antiquity than had been supposed; the Carmelite monk Paulinus[2] (really Werdin or Wesdin) surmising that the legendary war, with which was connected the story of Vishnu's incarnation in Krishna, was to be dated "a thousand and more years before the birth of Christ".

Thus far, both sides had simply proceeded on *à priori* principles, the view that Christianity could not give rise to anything bad being no more scientific than the view that all systems which resembled it must have borrowed from it. A comparatively scientific position was first taken up by the German Kleuker, who, discussing Paulinus' polemic, observed that he "willingly believed that the [Krishna] fable did not first arise out of these [Apocryphal] Gospels", but that nevertheless it might have derived "some matter" from them.[3] According to Weber, the view that the Krishna story was the earlier became for a time the more general one. I doubt if this was so; but in 1810 we do find the English Orientalist Moor, following Jones, declaring it to be "very certain" that Krishna's "name and the general outline of his story were long anterior to the birth of our Savior, and probably to the time of Homer"[4] —this while saying nothing to countenance the theory of borrowing from Christianity, but on the contrary throwing

[1] "Mythologie des Indous", i, 445, cited by Weber.

[2] "Systema Brahmanicum," Rome, 1791, pp. 147, 152; cited by Weber.

[3] "Abhandlungen über die Geschichte und Alterthumskunde Asiens," Riga, 1797; iv, 70; cited by Weber.

[4] "Hindu Pantheon," p. 200.

out some new heterodox suggestions. Later the German mythologist Creuzer, in his great work,[1] set aside the supposed Christian parallels, and pointed rather to the Egyptian myth of Osiris. It was impossible, however, that this view should be quietly acquiesced in by Anglo-Indian scholarship, partly bound up as it has been with "missionary enterprise", and subservient as it is to the anti-philosophical spirit which has prevailed in English archæology since the French Revolution. It has been one of the most serious drawbacks to our knowledge of Indian antiquities that not only are the missionaries to such a large extent in possession of the field of research, but the scruples of English pietism, especially during the present century, tend to keep back all data that could in any way disturb orthodoxy at home. Of this tendency we shall find examples as we proceed. How far important evidence has been absolutely suppressed it is of course impossible to say; but observed cases of partial suppression create strong suspicions; and it is certain that the bulk of Christian criticism of the evidences produced has been much biassed by creed.

III.

On the other hand, however, the case in favor of the assumption of Christian priority has been in a general way strengthened by the precise investigation of Hindu literature, which has gone to show that much of it, as it stands, is of a much later redaction than had once been supposed. It has been truly said by Ritter that "in no literature are so many works to be found to which a remote origin has been assigned on insufficient grounds as in the Indian".[2] The measureless imagination of India, unparalleled in its disregard of fact and its range of exaggeration, has multiplied time in its traditions as wildly as it has multiplied action in its legends, with the result that its history is likely to remain one of the most uncertain of all that are

[1] "Symbolik," 3te Aufl. i, 42, cited by Weber.

[2] "History of Ancient Philosophy," Eng. tr. 1838, i, 69. Ritter's whole argument, which was one of the first weighty criticisms of the early assumptions of Orientalists, is extremely judicial and reasonable.

based on documents. It was, indeed, admitted by the first capable Orientalists that there is, properly speaking, no history in Indian literature at all.[1] All early historical traditions are untrustworthy; but no other people ever approached the flights of fancy of the Hindu mind, which has measured the lives of its mythic heroes by millions of years, and assigned to the *Institutes of Menu*, certainly not 3000 years old, an antiquity exceeding 4,320,000 years multiplied by six times seventy-one.[2] Of this delirium of speculation, the true explanation, despite all cavils, is doubtless that of Buckle—the influence of overwhelming manifestations of nature in fostering imagination and stunning the sceptical reason.[3] From even a moderate calculation of Indian antiquity, to say nothing of the fancies of the Brahmans, the step down to documentary facts is startling; and it was not unnatural that scepticism should in turn be carried to extremes.

When the documents are examined, it turns out that the oldest Indian inscriptions yet found are not three centuries earlier than the Christian era.[4] Nor does there seem a probability of much older records being found, there being reason to doubt whether the practice of writing in India dates many centuries earlier. Says Professor Max Müller:

"There is no mention of writing materials, whether paper, bark, or skins, at the time when the Indian Diaskeuasts [say, editors] collected the songs of their Rishis [poets or seers]; nor is there any allusion to writing during the whole of the Brahmana period [*i.e.*, according to the Professor's division, down to about 600 or 800 B.C.] . . . . Nay, more than this, even during the Sutra period [600 to 200 B.C.] all the evidence we can get would lead us to suppose that, even then, though

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[1] See Colebrooke in "Asiatic Researches", ix, 398–9.

[2] Jones in "Asiatic Researches", ii, 116. See a number of samples of this disease of imagination cited by Buckle, 3-vol. ed. i, 135–7.

[3] Possibly, too, the partly entranced state of mind cultivated by Hindu sages may involve a repetitive brain process analogous to that seen in dreams, in which objects are multiplied and transformed, and the waking perception of time is superseded.

[4] Those of king Asoka, about 250 B.C. Tiele, "Outlines of Hist. of Anc. Religions", Eng. tr. p. 121. See them in "Asiatic Society's Journals", viii, xii; in Wheeler's "History of India", vol. iii. Appendix i; and in *Indian Antiquary*, June, 1877, vol. vi. Interesting extracts are given in Prof. Müller's "Introduction to the Science of Religion", ed. 1882, pp. 5, 6.

the art of writing began to be known, the whole literature of India was preserved by oral tradition only."[1]

Professor Müller's division of Indian historical periods is somewhat unscientific, but Professor Tiele, who complains of this, accepts his view as to the introduction of the art of writing:

"Nearchus (325 B.C.)[2] and Megasthenes[3] (300 B.C.) both state that the Indians did not write their laws; but the latter speaks of inscriptions upon mile-stones, and the former mentions letters written on cotton. From this it is evident that writing, probably of Phœnician origin, was known in India before the third century B.C., but was applied only rarely, if at all, to literature."[4]

But all this, of course, is perfectly consistent with the oral transmission of a great body of very ancient utterance. All early compositions, poetic, religious, and historical, were transmissible in no other way; and the lack of letters did not at all necessarily involve loss. In all probability ancient unwritten compositions were often as accurately transmitted as early written ones, just because in the former case there was a severe discipline of memory, whereas in the other the facility of transcription permitted of many

[1] "History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature," pp. 500–1. Cp. p. 244.

[2] One of the generals of Alexander the Great. Only fragments of his account of his voyage on the Indian coast are preserved.

[3] Greek ambassador from Seleucus Nicator to the Indian king Sandracottus (Chandragupta) about 300 B.C. He wrote a work on India, of which, as of that of Nearchus, we have only the fragments preserved by later historians. See them all translated in the *Indian Antiquary*, vols. 6 and 7, (1877-8) from the collection of Schwanbeck.

[4] "Outlines," as cited above. On the general question of the antiquity of writing, it was long ago remarked by Jacob Bryant that "The Romans carried their pretensions to letters pretty high, and the Helladian Greeks still higher; yet the former marked their years by a nail driven into a post; and the latter for some ages simply wrote down the names of the Olympic victors from Corœbus, and registered the priestesses of Argos" (Holwell's "Mythological Dictionary", condensed from Bryant's "Analysis of Ancient Mythology", 1793, p. 259). The question as regards India, however, cannot be taken as settled. In view of the antiquity of literary habits in other parts of Asia, it may well turn out that the estimates above cited are too low. Tiele's "only rarely, if at all," makes rather too little of the Greek testimony. The Phœnician origin of the Indian alphabets, too, is only one of many conflicting hypotheses. For a discussion of these see I. Taylor's valuable work on "The Alphabet", 1883, ii, 304, ff.

errors, omissions, and accidental interpolations. And the practice of oral transmission has survived.

"Even at the present day, when MSS. are neither scarce nor expensive, the young Brahmâns who learn the songs of the Vedas and the Brâhmanas and the Sutras, invariably learn them from oral tradition, and learn them by heart. They spend year after year under the guidance of their teacher, learning a little day after day, repeating what they have learnt as part of their daily devotion . . . . The ambition to master more than one subject is hardly known in India . . . . In the Mahâbhârata we read, 'Those who sell the Vedas, and even those who write them, those also who defile them, shall go to hell'. Kumarila [800 A.C.] says: 'That knowledge of the truth is worthless which has been acquired from the Veda, if . . . it has been learnt from writing, or been received from a Sûdra.' How then was the Veda learnt? It was learnt by every Brahman during twelve years of his studentship or Bramacharyâ."[1]

IV.

In point of fact, no one disputes that the Vedas are in the main of extremely ancient composition (the oldest portions being at least three thousand years old, and possibly much more)[2]; and that a large part even of the literature of commentary upon them, as the Brâhmanas, treatises of ritual and theology, and the Upanishads, religio-philosophical treatises, originated at more or less distant periods before our era. We have seen that Pro-

[1] Müller, work cited, pp. 501–3. Comp. Tiele, "Outlines", p. 123. This description corresponds remarkably with Cæsar's account of the educational practices of the Druids. He tells (*De Bello Gallico*, vi, 14) that many entered the Druid discipline, learning orally a great number of verses; some remaining in pupillage as much as twenty years; and this though writing was freely used for secular purposes. Cæsar offers as explanation the wish to keep sacred lore from the many, and the desire to strengthen the faculty of memory. We may add, in regard alike to Druids and Brahmans, the prestige of ancient custom, which in other religions made priests continue to use stone knives long after metal ones were invented. "Brahmanism . . . . has kept to the last to its primitive tools, its penthouses of bamboo, its turf-clods and grass-blades, and a few vessels of wood" (Barth, "The Religions of India", Eng. tr., p. 129). Modern European parallels will readily suggest themselves.

[2] Barth, p. 6.

fessor Müller makes even the Sutra period—that of the composition of manuals for public and domestic guidance—begin about 600 B.C. But the religious history of India, as of every other country, is that of a process of development; and just as the system of the Vedas was superimposed on simpler forms of nature worship,[1] so the elaborate system based on the Vedas by the Brahmans was innovated upon from different sides. Thus, four or five centuries before our era, there arose the great movement of Buddhism, in which comparatively new doctrine was bound up with modifications of ancient legends; while on the other hand deities formerly insignificant, or little known, gradually came to be widely popular. Such a development took place in a notable degree in the case of the cult of Krishna, now specially under notice.

At the present moment, the worship of Krishna is confessedly the most popular of the many faiths of India; and it has unquestionably been so for many centuries. It is equally certain, however, that it is no part of the ancient Vedic system; and that the bulk of the literature in connection with it is not more than a thousand years old, if so much. Mention of Krishna certainly does occur in the earlier literature, but the advent of his worship as a preponderating religion in India is late. On the face of the matter, it would seem to have been accepted and endorsed by the Brahmans either because they could not help themselves or by way of a weapon to resist some other cultus that pressed Brahmanism hard. Hence the peculiar difficulty of the question of origins as regards its details.

The chief documents in which Krishnaism is to be studied are (1) the Mahâbhârata, a great epic poem, of which the events are laid long anterior to our era, and of which much of the matter is probably pre-Buddhistic;[2] (2) the Bhagavat Gîtâ or "Song of the Most High"; (3)

[1] In the Veda, says M. Barth, "I recognise a literature that is pre-eminently sacerdotal, and in no sense a popular one" ("Relig. of India", pref. p. xiii).

[2] See Prof. Goldstücker's essay in the *Westminster Review*, April, 1868; or his "Literary Remains", ii, 135, 142. The Mahâbhârata, says M. Barth, "which is in the main the most ancient source of our knowledge of these religions, is not even roughly dated; it has been of slow growth, extending through ages, and is, besides, of an essentially encyclopædic character" ("Religions of India", p. 187; cp. Goldstücker, ii, 130).

the Purânas, an immense body of legendary and theological literature, including eighteen separate works, of which the earliest written belong to our eighth or ninth century. It is in the latter, especially in the Bhagavat Purâna and Vishnu Purâna, that the great mass of mythic narrative concerning Krishna is to be found. The tenth book of Bhagavat Purâna consists wholly of the Krishna saga. The Gîtâ is a fine poetico-philosophical composition, one of the masterpieces of Indian literature in its kind, in every way superior to the Purânas; and it simply makes Krishna the voucher of its lofty pantheistic teaching, giving the legends as to his life.[1] Of this work the date is uncertain, and will have to be considered later. The Mahâbhârata, again, presents Krishna as a warrior demi-God,[2] performing feats of valor, and so mixed up with quasi-historic events as to leave it an open question whether the story has grown up round the memory of an actual historic personage. But it is impossible to construct for that legendary history any certain chronology; and the obscurity of the subject gives to Christian writers the opportunity to argue that even in the epos Krishna is not an early but a late element—an interpolation arising out of the modern popularity of his cultus. We must then look to analysis and comparative research for light on the subject.

V.

The outlines of the Krishna saga are well known, but for the convenience of readers I will here transcribe the brief analysis given by M. Barth in his "Religions of India" (pp. 172–4):

"As a character in the epic . . ., and as accepted by Vishnuism, Krishna is a warlike prince, a hero, equally invincible in war and love, but above all very crafty, and of a singularly doubtful moral character, like all the figures, however, which

[1] Owing to the Bhagavat Gîtâ and the Bhagavat Purâna being alike sometimes referred to as "the Bhagavat", there has occurred the mistake of referring to the Gîtâ as containing the legends of Krishna's life.

[2] In one passage, "all the heroes of the poem are represented as incarnations of Gods or demons" (Barth, "Religions of India", p. 172 *n.*).

retain in a marked way the mythic impress. The son of *Vasudeva* and *Devakî* . . . he was born at Mathurâ, on the Yâmunâ, between Delhi and Agra, among the race of the Yâdavas, a name which we meet with again at a later period in history as that of a powerful Râjput tribe. Like those of many solar heroes, his first appearances were beset with perils and obstructions of every kind. On the very night of his birth his parents had to remove him to a distance beyond the reach of his uncle, King Kamsa, who sought his life because he had been warned by a voice from heaven that the eighth son of Devakî would put him to death, and who consequently had his nephews the princes regularly made away with as soon as they saw the light. . . . Conveyed to the opposite shore of the Yamunâ, and put under the care of the shepherd *Nanda* and his wife *Yaçodâ*, he was brought up as their son in the woods of Vrindâvana, with his brother *Balarâma*, 'Rama the strong', who had been saved as he was from massacre", and "who has for his mother at one time Devakî herself, at another time another wife of Vasudeva, *Rohinî*. . . . The two brothers grew up in the midst of the shepherds, slaying monsters and demons bent on their destruction, and sporting with the Gopîs, the female cowherds of Vrindâvana. These scenes of their birth and infancy, these juvenile exploits, these erotic gambols with the Gopîs, this entire idyll of Vrindâvana, . . . became in course of time the essential portion of the legend of Krishna, just as the places which were the scene of them remain to the present time the most celebrated centres of his worship. Arrived at adolescence, the two brothers put to death Kamsa, their persecutor, and Krishna became king of the Yâdavas. He continued to clear the land of monsters, waged successful wars against impious kings, and took a determined side in the great struggle of the sons of Pându against those of Dhritarâshtra, which forms the subject of the Mahâbhârata. In the interval he had transferred the seat of his dominion to the fabulous city of Dvârakâ, 'the city of gates', the gates of the West, built on the bosom of the western sea, and the site of which has since been localised in the peninsula of Gujarât. It was there that he was overtaken, himself and his race, by the final catastrophe. After having been present at the death of his brother, and seen the Yâdavas, in fierce struggle, kill one another to the last man, he himself perished, wounded in the heel, like Achilles, by the arrow of a hunter."

In this mere outline, there may be seen several features of the universal legend of a conquering and dying sun-God; and, though the identification of Krishna with the sun is as old as the written legend, it may be well at the outset to indicate the solar meanings that have been attributed to

the story by various writers. The name of Krishna means "the black one", and he thus in the first place comes into line with the black deities of other faiths, notably the Osiris[1] of Egypt, to say nothing of the black manifestations of Greek deities,[2] and of the Christian Jesus.[3] Why then is Krishna, in particular, black? It is, I think, fallacious to assume that any one cause can be fixed as the reason for the attaching of sanctity to black deities or statues in ancient religions; primary mythological causes might be complicated by the fact that the smoke of sacrifices had from time immemorial blackened statues innumerable, and by the mere fact that, as in Egypt, black stone was very serviceable for purposes of statuary. But there *is*, all the same, a primary mythological explanation; and this is offered by Professor Tiele in the present case. Krishna is "the hidden sun-god of the night"[4] a character attaching more or less to many figures in the Hindu pantheon.

"That Parasu-Râma, the 'axe-Râma', is a God of the solar fire, admits of no doubt. He springs from the Brâhman race of the Bhrigus (lightning), his father's name is Jamadagni, 'the burning fire'. Like all Gods of the solar fire, he is the nightly or hidden one, and accordingly he slays Arjuna, the bright God of day. . . . . In the myth of Krishna, on the other hand, the two sun-Gods are friendly,[5] the old pair of deities Vishnu and Indra in a new shape".[6]

It should be also noted, I think, that Vishnu, of whom Krishna is an Incarnation, is represented as "dark blue".[7]

The complications of solar mythology, however, are endless; and it is one thing to give a general account such

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[1] Plutarch, "On Isis and Osiris", cc. 22, 33.

[2] Pausanias, i, 48; viii, 42; ix, 27.

[3] For a list of black Christian statues of Mary and Jesus (= Isis and Horos) see Higgins' "Anacalypsis", i, 138. Compare King's "Gnostics", 2nd ed., p. 173.

[4] "Outlines," p. 145. Cp. Plutarch, "Is. and Os.", 9.

[5] In Egypt, Typhon, who was *red* ("Is. and Os." cc. 22, 30, 31, 33) and was declared to be solar (*Id.* 41), was the enemy of the "good" sun-God Osiris, who was *black*, and who was also declared to represent the *lunar* world (*Id. ib.* Contrast 51, 52). The transpositions are endless—a warning against rigid definitions in less known mythologies.

[6] "Outlines," p. 145. Arjuna is "himself a name and form of Indra" (Weber in *Indian Antiquary*, iv, 246).

[7] Moor's "Hindu Pantheon", pp. 26, 27. Goldstücker, "Remains", i, 309.

as this, and another to trace with confidence the evolution of such a deity as Krishna from the beginning. Professor de Gubernatis, one of the most acute, if also one of the more speculative of modern mythologists, is convinced of the solar character of Krishna; but points out that in the Rig Vedas he is merely a demon[1]—a natural character of "the black one"; is the enemy of the Vedic God Indra, and only later becomes the God of the cows and cowherds.[2] He remains, however, "the God who is black during the night, but who becomes luminous in the morning among the cows of the dawning, or among the female cowherds".[3] And that original relation to Indra is perfectly borne out by the written legend, in which Krishna is represented as turning away worshippers from Indra,[4] whose worship his probably superseded, and who figures in the account of Krishna's death and ascension as a subordinate God,[5] (obviously=the firmament, a character always more or less associated with him in the Vedas, where he is "the pluvial and thundering God"[6]) through whose region of space Krishna passes on the way to heaven.[7]

But as against all such attempts to explain Krishnaism in terms of the observed mythic tendencies of ancient Aryan religion, there is maintained on the Christian side—not, as we shall see, by any important thinker—the proposition before mentioned, that the entire Krishna legend is a late fabrication, based on the Christian gospels. It is

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[1] Compare Senart, *Essai sur la Légende du Buddha*, 2e ed. p. 322, *n.* In the early faiths, the "demon" of mixed characteristics is a constant figure, he being often the deity of outsiders to begin with; while in any case the need to propitiate him would tend to raise his rank. Compare the habit, common in rural Britain till recently, of "speaking the Devil fair", and calling him "the good man". He, being a survival of the genial Pan, exemplifies both of the tendencies to compromise. Osiris and Isis, again, were held to be raised "from the rank of good dæmons to that of deities", while Typhon was discredited, but still propitiated. See Plutarch, l.c. 27, 30. Cp. 25–6.

[2] "Zoological Mythology," 1872, i, 75.

[3] *Id.* p. 51.

[4] "Vishnu Purana", B. v, cc. 10, 11. Wilson's trans. 1840, pp. 522—7.

[5] He acknowledges himself vanquished by Krishna (*Id.* c. 30, p. 588) and honors him (*Id.* c. 12, p. 528).

[6] Gubernatis, i, 403.

[7] Maurice, "History of Hindostan", ii, 473, professing to follow the Mahâbhârata.

necessary, therefore, to examine that argument in detail before we form any conclusions.

VI.

Among modern statements of the Christian theory of Krishnaism, in its thorough-going form, the most explicit and emphatic I have met with is that inserted by an anonymous Sanskritist in a criticism of the first volume of Mr. J. Talboys Wheeler's "History of India," in the *Athenæum* of August 10th, 1867. The criticism is hostile, pointing out that Mr. Wheeler "is not a Sanskrit scholar, nor has he very carefully examined the translations with which he works", so that "we are never sure, without referring to the original, what particulars [as to Hindu legends] are drawn from the great epic, and what are from the Purânas and other sources". It might have been added that the previous performance of Mr. Wheeler had shown him to be unfit for the task of writing a good history. He had produced a number of popular abridgments or manuals of Old and New Testament history, which are of the most uncritical and unscientific description. They are not even trustworthy summaries of what the biblical books contain. Thus the compiler does not scruple to assert, in flat misrepresentation of the text, that while "Matthew, who wrote for the Jews, traces the pedigree of Joseph through David to Abraham, Luke, who wrote for the Gentiles, traces the descent of Mary through David to Adam".[1] An apologist who thus perverts fact in the interest of faith, naturally does not scruple to allege that Celsus and Porphyry "recognise" the gospels as the "genuine work of the apostles";[2] and for such a reasoner, it is readily intelligible, the "mythic theory" is disposed of by the argument that it would make out the history of Julius Cæsar to be a thorough myth. It is significant of the position of philo-

[1] "Abridgment of New Testament History," 1854, p. 35. Cp. "Analysis and Summary of New Testament History," 1859, by same author (p. 28), where it is explained that Luke went back to Adam because he was "desirous of proving [the Gentiles'] admission into the Gospel covenant"—the descent of David from Adam not being an established hypothesis.

[2] "Analysis," as cited, p. xxviii.

sophy in England at present that such a writer is actually made Professor of "Moral and Mental Philosophy and Logic" in the Presidency College of Madras, and that he should write an elaborate history of India with a considerable measure of acceptance.

But the critic of Mr. Wheeler's history in the *Athenæum* is hardly the person to take exception to intellectual tendencies such as these. His own philosophy of history includes the belief that "the history of Krishnah has been borrowed by the Brahmans from the Gospel"; and he proceeds to prove his case by the following account of the legend in the Bhagavat Purâna and Mahâbhârata—an account which is worth citing at length as indicating a number of the minor myth-resemblances in the Hindu and Christian narratives, and as unintentionally paving the way for a fresh historical investigation of the latter:

"The recital [in the Purâna] commences with the announcement that to hear the story of Krishnah and believe it is all that is required for salvation; and throughout the narrative the theme of exhortation is faith. Next it is declared that sin and impiety having spread over the whole world, the Deity resolved to become incarnate in the form of Krishnah. He determined to destroy a tyrant king, whose name signifies Lust, who ruled at Mathurá, and who murdered children. Krishnah is represented as born the nephew of this king, and therefore of royal descent. The name of his tribe is Yadu, which is almost the same as Yahudah in Hebrew. His real mother was Devakí, which signifies the Divine Lady, and his reputed mother Yasoda, or Yashoda. His father's name was Vasudev. In comparing this word with Yúsef, we must remember that Dev in Sanskrit signifies divine, and the *d* appears to have been inserted from that word. The resemblance of the name Krishnah itself to Christ is remarkable enough, but it becomes more so when we consider that the root 'Krish' means 'to tinge', and *may well be taken to signify also 'anoint'*. Preliminary to the birth of Krishna, the four Vedas become incarnate, and the tyrant king is warned by a divine voice that a son is to be born in his house who will destroy him. Upon this he puts to death the infants that are born to the Divine Lady, and makes a great slaughter of the tribe of Yadu. Notwithstanding this, Krishnah is born and placed in a basket for winnowing corn; *in other words, a manger*. His father then carries him off to Gokula (or Goshen, the eastern side of Lower Egypt), which is represented as a country placed near Mathurá. On finding that the child has escaped, the tyrant makes a

slaughter of infant children. A variety of puerile fables suited to the Hindu taste follow, showing how Krishnah was subject to his reputed mother, and how he reproved her. Being now thought to be the son of a shepherd, Krishnah plays in the wilderness, and is assaulted by the various fiends and overcomes them all. This temptation winds up with the overthrow of the great serpent, upon whose head, 'assuming the weight of the three worlds, he treads'. Even in the strange recital of Krishnah's sports with the cowherdesses, threads of allusions to the Gospels are not wanting. Krishnah is continually manifesting his divinity and yet disclaiming it. He goes to an Indian fig-tree and utters a sort of parable, saying, Blessed are those that bear pain themselves and show kindness to others. In another place he says that those who love him shall never suffer death. He proceeds to abolish the worship of Indra, the god of the air, and to invite his followers to worship a mountain. He directs those about him to close their eyes, and issues from the interior of the mountain with a 'face like the moon and wearing a diadem'. In this there seems to be an allusion to the Transfiguration. Then follows a scene suited to Hindu taste. Indra rains down a deluge, and Krishnah defends the inhabitants of Braj by supporting the mountain on his finger, and he is then hailed as the god of gods. Krishnah now resolves on returning from the country to the city of the tyrant king. He is followed by a multitude of women and by the cowherds. He enters the city in royal apparel. He is met by a deformed woman, who anoints him with sandalwood oil. On this Krishnah makes her straight and beautiful, and promises that his regard for her shall be perpetual; on which her good fortune is celebrated by all the people of the place. In the account of this miracle the narratives in Mark xiv, 3, and Luke xiii, 11, are blended. It may be as well to mention here another miracle, which is mentioned in the Mahá Bhárata. Krishnah is there said to have restored the son of a widow to life, 'And Krishnah laid hold of the dead man's hand and said, Arise, and by the will of the Almighty the dead man immediately arose' . . . . A great army of barbarians is . . . . assembled by a distant king to destroy the holy city of Mathurá . . . . Krishnah then transports the city and his disciples to Dwarka, which is built in the sea. *This appears to be a distorted account of the siege of Jerusalem and the flight of the Christians.* Krishnah now returns to Mathurá and combats with the barbarians; flies from their chief and is pursued into a cave of the White mountains, where there is a man sleeping, covered with a silken robe, apparently dead. This man arises from sleep and consumes the pursuer of Krishnah. In this account of the cave there are *evident allusions to the burial and resurrection of Christ;* and in a following chapter there is an account of the descent of Krishnah into Hades

and his recovery of certain persons from the dead . . . . At the great sacrifice performed by Yudhishthira . . . . the task which devolves on Krishnah is that of washing the feet of those present. One person alone is said to have been dissatisfied, and that is Duryodhana, who is generally regarded as an incarnation of the Evil Spirit, and who, like Iscariot, here carries the bag, and acts as treasurer. . . . . It must be admitted, then, that there are most remarkable coincidences between the history of Krishnah and that of Christ. This being the case, and there being proof positive that Christianity was introduced into Judea at an epoch when there is good reason to suppose the episodes which refer to Krishnah were inserted in the Mahâ Bhârata, the obvious inference is that the Brahmans took from the Gospel such things as suited them, and so *added preëminent beauties to their national epic*, which otherwise would in no respect have risen above such poems as the Shâhnâmah of the Persians." [1]

As to the authorship of this criticism we can only speculate. In an allusion to the doctrine of the Bhagavat Gîtâ the writer expresses himself as "willing to admit" that "the Gîtâ is the most sublime poem that ever came from an uninspired pen"; thus taking up the position of ordinary orthodoxy, which presupposes the supernatural origin of the Christian system, and prejudges every such question as we are now considering. It is to be observed, however, that the critic is a professed Sanskritist; and it is unfortunately impossible in England to assume that even an eminent lay scholar does not in his researches hold a brief for the Church, whose influence so strongly permeates the universities. Professor Max Müller, who has professed to produce an "Introduction to the Science of Religion", is found writing to a controversial missionary in terms which imply at once belief in Christian supernaturalism and a fear that the discussion of certain questions in comparative mythology may damage the faith. "Even supposing", he writes, "some or many of the doctrines of Christianity were found in other religions also (and they certainly are), does that make them less true? Does a sailor trust his own compass less, because it can be proved that the Chinese had a compass before we had it?" And again: "These questions regarding the similarities between the Christian and any other religions are very difficult to treat, and

[1] *Athenæum*, as cited, pp. 168-9

unless they are handled carefully much harm may be done".[1] From scholarship of this kind one turns perforce to that of the continent, where, whatever be the value of the conclusions reached, we can at least as a rule trust the scholar to say candidly what he knows, and to look impartially for the truth.

Thus Professor Weber, who refers to the *Athenæum* critic's argument in his study on the "Geburtsfest", emphatically distinguishes between what he thinks plausible and what seems to him extravagant,[2] though the argument in question goes to support some of his own positions. The identifications of the names Yasoda, Yúsef, and Vasudev, Gokula and Goshen, he rightly derides as being "*à la* P. Georgi"; and he mentions that the stories of the woman's oblation and forgiveness, and also that of the raising of the widow's dead son, are not from the Mahâbhârata at all, but from the Jaimini-Bhârata, a work of the Purâna order[3]—a point which, of course, would not essentially affect the argument. On the main question he sums up as follows:

"If we could so construe these words that they should harmonise with the view of Kleuker" [before quoted] "we might contentedly accept them. If, however, they are to be understood as meaning that the history of Krishna in the lump (*überhaupt*) was first taken from the 'Gospel history' (and indeed the author seems not disinclined to that view), then we cannot endorse them."[4]

That is to say, the theory of the Christian origin of the general Krishna legend is rejected by Weber, the oldest and most important living supporter of the view that *some details* in that legend have so originated. And no only is this rejection overwhelmingly justified, as we shall see, by the whole mass of the evidence, earlier and later, but so far as I am aware no Sanskrit scholar of any eminence has ever put his name to the view maintained

[1] Letters to C. A. Elflein, printed at end of a pamphlet by the latter entitled "Buddha, Krishna, and Christ".

[2] He puts a "*sic!*" after the spelling *Yushoda* in quoting this passage, and another after the word "inserted" in the phrase "appears to have been inserted from that word", apparently considering these items absurd. As to the spelling, I do not quite see why; but the "inserted" is certainly foolish enough.

[3] "Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî", as cited, p. 315, *n.*

[4] *Ib.* p. 316.

by the anonymous writer in the *Athenæum*. That writer indeed goes the whole length to which Weber says he seems inclined: the passages transcribed are sufficiently explicit. That thesis, embodying as it does the most uncritical extravagance of the earliest Christian investigators, deserves to become historic as an exemplification of the extent to which the spirit of orthodoxy has perverted and debased English scholarship. Even Mr. Talboys Wheeler, who believes all the Gospels "and more", does not go to these lengths. He is more guarded even where he suggests similar notions.

"The account of Raja Kansa", he observes, "is supposed by many to have been borrowed from the Gospel account of King Herod. Whether this be the case or not, it is certain that most of the details are mythical, and inserted for the purpose of ennobling the birth of Krishna" [1]—

—it being Mr. Wheeler's opinion that the story of Krishna as a whole has a personal and historic basis. He further holds that "the grounds upon which Krishna seems to have forgiven the sins of the tailor" [who made clothes for his companions] "seem to form a travestie of Christianity";[2] and, like the writer in the *Athenæum* and earlier pietists, he thinks that the Gospel stories of the bowed woman and the spikenard "seem to have been thrown together in the legend of Kubja".[3] On the other hand, however, he conceives that the Hindus may have invented some things for themselves:

"Krishna's triumph over the great serpent Kaliya was at one time supposed to be borrowed from the triumph of Christ over Satan. There appears, however, to be no allusion whatever to the bruising of the Serpent's head in the sense in which it is understood by Christian commentators." [4]

It may be surmised that Mr. Wheeler, being capable of this amount of prudence, would not be disposed to endorse the more original speculations of his critic in the *Athenæum*, a few of which I have put in italics. It may be noted, too, that he does not think fit to dwell much on the puerility which fits the details of the Krishna legend for the "Hindu taste" and the "Hindu mind", though his earlier writings betray no suspicion of puerility in the tales of the Gospels.

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[1] "History of India", i, 464, *note*. [2] *Id.*, p. 470, *n*.
[3] *Id.*, p. 471, *n*. [4] *Id.*, p. 465, *n*.

VII.

Absurd as are the Christian pretences as to the late origin of the Krishna legend, it is necessary to cite the evidence which repels them. The point, indeed, might be held as settled once for all by the evidence of Patanjali's Mahâbhâshya or "Great Commentary", a grammatical work based on previous ones, and dating from the second century B.C., but first made in part accessible to European scholars by the Benares edition of 1872. The evidence of the Mahâbhâshya is thus summed up by the learned Professor Bhandarkar of Bombay, after discussion of the passages on which he founds, as clearly proving:

"1st. That the stories of the death of Kansa and the subjugation of Bali were popular and current in Patanjali's time.

2nd. That Krishna or Vasudeva was mentioned in the story as having killed Kansa.

3rd. That such stories formed the subjects of dramatic representations, as Purânic stories are still popularly represented on the Hindu stage.

4th. That the event of Kansa's death at the hands of Krishna was in Patanjali's time believed to have occurred at a very remote time."[1]

Other passages, Professor Bhandarkar thinks, would appear "to be quoted from an existing poem on Krishna"; and in his opinion, "Not only was the story of Krishna and Kansa current and popular in Patanjali's time, but it appears clearly that the former was worshipped as a God". And the Professor concludes that "If the stories of Krishna and Bali, and others which I shall notice hereafter, were current and popular in the second century B.C., some such works as the Harivansa and the Purânas must have existed then".

Discussing the Mahâbhâshya on its publication (some years after his paper on the Birth-festival) Professor Weber had already[2] conceded that it pointed not only almost beyond doubt to a pre-existing poetic compilation of the Mahâbhârata Sagas, but to the ancient existence of the

[1] Art. "Allusions to Krishna in Patanjali's Mahabhashya" in the *Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, Vol. iii (1874), p. 16.

[2] *Indische Studien*, xiii, (1873), pp. 354-5, 357.

Kansa myth. Kansa, he pointed out, figured in regard to Bali, in the passages quoted in the Mahâbhâshya, as a *demon*, and his "enmity towards Krishna equally assumed a *mythical* character, into which also the different colors of their followers (the 'black ones' are then also those of Kansa? though Krishna himself signifies 'black'!) would seem to enter. Or", the Professor goes on, speculating at random, "could there be thereby signified some Indian battles between Aryans and the aborigines occupying India before them?" In another place,[1] alluding to the contention of Dr. Burnell[2] that "much in the modern philosophical schools of India comes from some form of Christianity derived from Persia", Professor Weber pointed out that "quite recently, through the publication of the Mâhabhâshya, a much older existence is proved for the Krishna cultus than had previously seemed admissible". Finally, in commenting[3] on the argument of Professor Bhandarkar, Professor Weber allows that the passages cited by the scholar from Patanjali are "quite conclusive and very welcome" as to an intermediate form of Krishna-worship; though he disputes the point as to the early existence of literature of the Purâna order—a point with which we are not here specially concerned—and goes on to contend that the passages in question "do not interfere at all with the opinion of those who maintain, on quite reasonable grounds", that the *later* development of Krishnaism "has been *influenced to a certain degree* by an acquaintance with the doctrines, legends, and symbols of the early Christians; or even with the opinion of those who are inclined to find in the Bhagavadgitâ traces of the Bible; for though I for my part am as yet not convinced at all in this respect, the *age* of the Bhagavadgitâ is still so uncertain that these speculations are at least not shackled by any chronological obstacles".

I know of no recent expert opinion which refuses to go at least as far as Weber does here. His persistent contention as to the presence of some Christian elements in the Krishna cult I will discuss later; but in the meantime

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[1] Notice of vol. iv of Muir's "Original Sanskrit Texts", 1873, reprinted in Weber's *Indische Streifen*, iii, 190-1.

[2] *Academy*, June 14th, 1873.

[3] In the *Indian Antiquary*, Aug. 1875 = iv, 246.

it is settled that the most conservative Sanskrit scholarship on the continent not only admits but insists on the pre-Christian character of the Krishna mythus, and of such an important quasi-Christian element in it as the story of Kansa, which had so zealously been claimed (and that with Professor Weber's consent in former years) as an adaptation from the Herod story in the Christian Gospel.

VIII.

The proof of the pre-Christian antiquity of the Krishna cult, however, does not merely rest on the text of the Mahâbhâshya, or the conclusions of scholars in regard to that. The folly of the orthodox Christian argument was apparent—it was rejected, we have seen, by Professor Weber—before the passages in the Mahâbhâshya were brought forward. There have long been known at least three inscriptions, in addition to at least one other literary allusion, which prove Krishnaism to have flourished long before the period at which the Christians represent it to have been concocted from the Gospels.

1. The Bhitârî pillar inscription, transcribed and translated by Dr. W. H. Mill,[1] and dating from, probably, the second century of our era, proves Krishna to be then an important deity. The Krishna passage runs, in Dr. Mill's translation:—"May he who is like Krishna still obeying his mother Devakî, after his foes are vanquished, he of golden rays, with mercy protect this my design". This translation Lassen[2] corrects, reading thus:—"Like the conqueror of his enemies, Krishna encircled with golden rays, who honors Devakî, may he maintain his purpose"; and explaining that the words are to be attributed to the king named in the inscription (Kumâragupta), and not to the artist who carved it, as Dr. Mill supposed. "As in the time to which this inscription belongs", Lassen further remarks, "human princes were compared with Gods, Krishna is here represented as a divine being,

[1] In the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, January 1837, pp. 1–17.

[2] *Indische Alterthumskunde*, ii (1849), p. 1108, *note*.

though not as one of the highest Gods". Dr. Mill, on the other hand, holds Krishna to be understood as "the supreme Bhagavat" referred to in other parts of the inscription. However this may be, the cultus is proved to have existed long before the arrival of Christian influences.

2. Two fragmentary inscriptions discovered in 1854 by Mr. E. C. Bayley[1] of the Indian Civil Service, equally point to the early deification of Krishna. One has the words "Krishnayasasa árāma" in Aryan Pali letters; the other "Krishnayasasya árāma médangisya". The two first words mean "The Garden of Krishnayasas", this name meaning "the glory of Krishna"; and Mr. Bayley thinks that "médangisya,"=corpulent, is some wag's addition to the original inscription. As to the date, Mr. Bayley writes:—"The form of the Indian letters had already led me to assign them roughly to the first century A.D.[2] On showing them, however, to Major A. Cunningham, he kindly pointed out that the foot strokes of the Aryan letters ally them to those on the coins of 'Pakores'; and he therefore would place them more accurately in the first half of the second century A.D.[2] at the earliest." Major Cunningham, it will be remembered, is one of those who see imitation of Christianity in the Krishna legends, so his dating is not likely to be over early. In any case, Mr. Bayley admits that the inscriptions "would seem to indicate the admission of Krishna into the Hindu Pantheon at the period" when they were cut. "If, however", he adds, "this be eventually established, it by no means follows that the name was applied to the same deity as at present, still less that he was worshipped in the same manner." It is not very clear what Mr. Bayley means by "the same deity"; or whether he would admit the God of the Jews to be the same deity as the Father of Jesus Christ, as worshipped by Archdeacon Farrar. But if he merely means to say that the Hindu conception of Krishna, like his ritual, might be modified after centuries, his proposition may readily be accepted.

[1] *Journal of As. Soc.* xxiii, 57.

[2] By "century A.D." Mr. Bayley means "century after Christ". "First century *anno domini*" is nonsense. In this paper I use "A.C." to signify "after Christ" (not "*ante Christum*"), as "B.C." signifies "before Christ". This is surely the reasonable course.

3. The Buddal pillar inscription, translated by Wilkins,[1] to which I have observed no allusion in recent writers on Krishnaism, serves equally to prove the early existence of a legend of a divine Krishna born of Devakî and nursed by Yasoda. It contains the passage, alluding to a distinguished lady or princess:—"She, like another Devakî, bore unto him a son of high renown, who resembled the adopted of Yasodha and husband of Lakshmî"—the Goddess Lakshmî being here identified with Krishna's bride. This inscription was dated by Wilkins "shortly B.C.", and by Sir William Jones 67 A.C. I have not ascertained how it is placed by later scholars; but in any case it must long antedate the periods assigned by Professor Weber and the *Athenæum* critic to the arrival of the Christian influences which are supposed to have affected later Krishnaism.

4. In the Khandogya Upanishad, a document admittedly older than our era, there occurs[2] this passage:—"Ghora Angirisa, after having communicated this (view of the sacrifice) to Krishna, the son of Devakî—and he never thirsted again (after other knowledge)—said", etc. On this passage I transcribe the comment appended by Professor Müller to his translation:—

"The curious coincidence between Krishna Devakîputra, here mentioned as a pupil of Ghora Angirasa, and the famous Krishna, the son of Devakî, was first pointed out by Colebrooke, *Miscell. Essays*, ii, 177. Whether it is more than a coincidence is difficult to say. Certainly we can build no other conclusions on it than those indicated by Colebrooke, that new fables may have beeu constructed elevating this personage to the rank of a God. We know absolutely nothing of the old Krishna Devakîputra except his having been a pupil of Ghora Angirasa, nor does there seem to have been any attempt made by later Brahmans to connect their divine Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, with the Krishna Devakîputra of our Upanishad. This is all the more remarkable because the author of the Sandilyasutras, for instance, who is very anxious to found a srauta authority for the worship of Krishna Vasudeva as the supreme deity, had to be satisfied with quoting . . . . modern compilations . . . . Professor Weber has treated these questions very fully, but it is not quite clear to me whether he wishes to go beyond Colebrooke, and to admit more than a

[1] "Asiatic Researches", i, 131.
[2] iii, 17, 6; Müller's trans., "Sacred Books of the East', i, 52.

similarity of name between the pupil of Ghora Angirasa and the friend of the Gopîs."

Professor Weber, I may mention in passing, *does* "admit more than a similarity of name"; in his treatise on the Birth Festival[1] he founds on the Upanishad reference as indicating one of the stages in the development of Krishnaism. And as Professor Müller does not dispute in the least the antiquity and authenticity of that reference, but only queries "coincidence", it may be taken as pretty certain that we have here one more trace of the existence of the Krishna legend long before the Christian era. There is nothing in the least remarkable in the fact of the passage not being cited by a writer who wanted texts on the status of Krishna as "the supreme deity," because the passage clearly does not so present Krishna. But it is no part of our case to make out that Krishna was widely worshipped as "the supreme deity" before our era; on the contrary the evidence mostly goes to show that he only attained his eminence later. The point is that his name and story were current in India long before the Christian legends were heard of; and the series of mutually supporting testimonies puts this beyond doubt.

IX.

It does not seem likely, in the circumstances, that the force of the foregoing evidence will be disputed by any serious inquirer. At the same time, it is necessary to point out that some of the data relied on by some scholars, and in particular by Professor Lassen, to prove the early existence of Krishnaism, will not by themselves support that conclusion. Lassen, who identifies Krishna with the Indian Hercules spoken of by Megasthenes, puts his case thus:

"Megasthenes, whose account of ancient India is the weightiest because the oldest of all those left to us by foreigners, has . . . . mentioned [the] connexion of Krishna with the Pandavas, and his remarks deserve close attention . . . . as giving a historical foothold in regard to the vogue of the worship of Krishna. His statement is as follows: He" [*i.e.*, the Indian Hercules] "excelled all men in strength of

[1] As cited, p. 316.

body and spirit; he had purged the whole earth and the sea of evil, and founded many cities; of his many wives was born only one daughter, Παυδαίη, Pandaia, but many sons, among whom he divided all India, making them kings, whose descendants reigned through many generations and did famous deeds; some of their kingdoms stood even to the time when Alexander invaded India. After his death, divine honors had been paid him. (Diodor. ii, 39. Arrian, *Ind.* 8.) That we are entitled to take this Hercules for Krishna appears from the fact that he was specially honored by the people of Surasena. (Arrian, *Ind.* viii, 5.)[1]

"We may from this passage conclude with certainty that in the time of Megasthenes Krishna was honored as one of the highest of the Gods, and precisely in the character of Vishnu, who incarnated himself when the transgressions of the world began to overflow, and wiped them out. When Megasthenes describes him as bearing a club, there becomes apparent that writer's exact acquaintance with Indian matters, for Vishnu also carries a club (hence his name of *Gadâdhara*). That he also, like Hercules, wore a lion's hide, does not correspond to Krishna, and might seem to impute an inclination to make out an identity between the Greek and the Indian hero. Probably Megasthenes was misled by the fact that in Sanskrit the word lion is used to indicate a pre-eminent excellence in men, and specially in warriors.[2] The account of Megasthenes further corresponds with the Indian Saga in respect that there many wives and sons are ascribed to Krishna (16,000 wives and 180,000 sons. See Vishnu Purâna, pp. 440, 591). Of cities founded by him, indeed, we know only Dvâraka; and Palibothra had another founder. Clearly, however, Pandaia is exactly the name of Pandava, especially when we compare the form Pândavya; and in that connexion my previous conclusion seems to be irrefragable, that Megasthenes has signified by the

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[1] *Note by Lassen.* Besides Mathura, Megasthenes named another city of the Surasenes, Κλεισόβορα, which Pliny ("Hist. Nat.", vi, 22) calls Carisobara or Cyrisoborea or Chrysobora, and which Von Bohlen ("Altes Indien," i, 233) with apparent justice reads as *Krishna-Pura*, city of Krishna. Ptolemaios names Mathura the city of the Gods.

[2] Lassen here assumes that Megasthenes knew Sanscrit, which is not at all certain. More probably he needed interpreters, and in talk between these and the Brahmins the poetic epithet "lion" would hardly be used. It would appear from a remark of Arrian (*Exped. Alex.* vi, 30) that only one Macedonian in Alexander's train learned Persian, so little were the Greeks disposed to master foreign languages. In Alexander's expedition, communications seem at times to have been filtered through three interpreters.

daughter of Krishna the sister, from whom the series of Pandava Kings were descended."[1]

Now, it is sufficiently plain on the face of this exposition that the identification of Krishna with the Indian Hercules of Megasthenes is imperfect. It leaves, says Professor Tiele, "much to be desired".[2] The fashion in which the great Indianist founds on one or two details and lets go by the board some serious discrepancies, is indeed somewhat characteristic of the scholars of his adopted nation. German scholarship has the defects of its great qualities: with an enormous mass of detail-knowledge it combines a relatively infirm and erratic judgment; and the intensity of its adhesion to its speculations would at times almost seem to be a direct result of the consciousness of possessing more data than ideas, "information without knowledge". In the whole course of this inquiry, the real light will, I think, be found forthcoming rather from France, Holland, India, and Italy, than from Germany; though the mere mass-weight of German scholarship commands attention.

In point of fact, a much more satisfactory identification of the Indian Hercules of Megasthenes lay ready to Lassen's hand in Wilson's introduction to his translation of the Vishnu Purâna. "The Hercules of the Greek writers", says that sound scholar, "was indubitably the Bala Râma of the Hindus; and their notices of Mathura on the Jumna, and of the kingdom of the Suraseni and the Pandæan country, evidence the prior currency of the traditions which constitute the argument of the Mahâbhârata, and which are constantly repeated in the Purânas, relating to the Pandava and Yâdava races, to Krishna and his contemporary heroes, and to the dynasties of the solar and lunar heroes."[3] M. Barth, it is true, has tacitly accepted Lassen's view;[4] but does not do so with any emphasis, and points out that it has been contested by Weber,[5] who, regarding Megasthenes' testimony as of uncertain value in any case, declines to accept the reading of Kleisobora as Krishnapura, and considers Wilson's

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[1] *Indische Alterthumskunde,"* i, (1847), 647-9.
[2] "Outlines" p. 148.
[3] Trans. of Vishnu Purâna, 1840, pref. pp. vi, vii.
[4] "Religions of India," p. 163.
[5] *Indische Studien*, ii, 409 (1853).

theory of Bala Râma more reasonable. And M. Senart, whose masterly "Essay on the Legend of Buddha" has confessedly put him in the front rank of Indianists and mythologists, very emphatically combats Lassen's position:

"In [Megasthenes'] Hercules M. Lassen finds Vishnu: it would be infinitely more *vraisemblable*, even in respect of the association with Krishna, to see in him Bala Râma, for whom his club would constitute, in the eyes of a Greek, an affinity, the more striking because it was exterior, with the son of Alcmena. It is necessary, I think, to accept the same synonymy for the Hercules spoken of by Megasthenes, who seems simply to have confounded under this one name legends appertaining to several of the avatars of Vishnu: it is, in my opinion, an error of over-precision to identify, as M. Lassen has done, that Hercules with Krishna."[1]

When we glance at the description of Bala Râma as he figures in Indian effigies, the view of Wilson and Senart seems sufficiently irrefragable:

"Bala Râma . . . . although a warrior, may, from his attributes, be esteemed a benefactor of mankind; for he bears a plough, and a pestle for beating rice; and he has epithets derived from the names of these implements—viz, Halayudha, meaning *plough-armed*, and Musali, as bearing the *musal*, or rice-beater. His name, Bala, means strength; and the beneficent attributes here noticed are by some called a ploughshare for hooking his enemies, and a club for destroying them; and *being sometimes seen with a lion's skin over his shoulders*, such statues have been thought to resemble, and allude to, those of the Theban Hercules and their legends." (*Note.* "The pestle is of hard wood, about four feet long, and two inches in diameter, with the ends tipped or ferrelled with iron, to prevent their splitting or wearing.")[2]

We shall have to consider further hereafter the mythological significance of Bala Râma and the other two Râmas. In the meantime, beyond noting how precisely the former corresponds with the Hercules of Megasthenes, it will suffice to say that one of the other Râmas, closely connected with Krishna, corresponds with the Hercules figure so far as to support strongly M. Senart's hypothesis of a combination of various personages in the Greek's conception:

"It is Rama Chandra, however, who is the favorite subject of

[1] "Essai sur la Légende du Buddha," 2e ed., p. 339, *n*.
[2] Moor's "Hindu Pantheon", p. 194.

heroic and amatory poetics: he is described 'of ample shoulders, brawny arms, extending to the knee; neck, shell-formed; chest, circular and full, with auspicious marks; body, hyacinthine; with eyes and lips of sanguine hue; the lord of the world; a moiety of Vishnu himself; the source of joy to Ikshwaku's race.' He is also called . . . . blue-bodied, an appellation of Krishna, as well as of the prototype of both—Vishnu."[1]

In fine, then, we are not entitled to say with Lassen that Megasthenes clearly shows the worship of Krishna to have attained the highest eminence in India three hundred years before our era; but what is certain is that the whole group of the legends with which Krishna is connected had at that date already a high religious standing; and that an important Krishna cultus, resting on these, existed before and spread through India after that period, but certainly flourished long before the advent of Christian influences.

X.

The early vogue of Krishna-worship being thus amply proved, it remains to consider the argument, so long persisted in by Professor Weber, as to the derivation of certain *parts* of Krishnaism from Christianity; keeping in view at the same time, of course, the more extensive claims made by the partisans of Christianity. With these Professor Weber is not to be identified: there is no reason to doubt that, even if he be mistaken, he is perfectly disinterested in his whole treatment of the subject. This is not to say, of course, that he has approached it from the first in a perfectly scientific frame of mind. I should rather say that his criticism represents the effects of the *general* European prepossession as regards Christianity on a candid truth-seeker who has not independently investigated Christian origins: that his attitude belongs to the period of criticism in which Christianity was not scientifically studied. It is only fair to mention that besides seeing Christian elements in Krishnaism he finds Homeric elements in the Râmâyana, the next great Hindu epic after the Mahâbhârata. That theory, however, seems to

[1] Moor's "Hindu Pantheon", p. 195.

have met very small acceptance among Indianists,[1] and need not be here discussed, any more than his old argument as to the influence of Greek art on India after Alexander, which stands on a different footing. One passage will serve to show his general position, which includes a frank avowal that there is evidence of Hindu influence on Christianity just about the time at which he thinks Christianity influenced Krishnaism :—

"Still more deep [than the Grecian] has been the influence of Christianity, also chiefly introduced by way of Alexandria, to which is to be attributed the idea of a personal, individual, universal God; and the idea of Faith, which is not to be found in India before this time, but which from this epoch forms a common type of all Hindu sects. In the worship of Krishna, an ancient hero, which now takes an entirely new form, even the name of Christ seems to stand in direct connexion with it, and several legends of Christ, as well as of his mother the divine virgin, are transferred to him.—In an opposite manner, Hindu philosophy too exercised a decided influence upon the formation of several of the Gnostic sects then rising, more especially in Alexandria. The Manichæan system of religion in Persia is very evidently indebted to Buddhistical conceptions, as the Buddhists in the freshness of their religious zeal, carried on by their principle of universalism, had early sent their missionaries beyond Asia. The great resemblance which the Christian ceremonial and rites (which were forming just at that time) show to the Buddhistic in many respects, can be best explained by the influence of the latter, being often too marked for it to be an independent production of each faith; compare the worship of relics, the architecture of church towers (with the Buddhistic Topes), the monastic system of monks and nuns, celibacy, the tonsure, confession, rosaries, bells, etc."[2]

I do not suppose that, after the banter he has bestowed in "Krishna's Geburtsfest" on the Father Georgi order of etymology, Professor Weber would now stand to the above suggestion about the name of Christ; or that he would give a moment's countenance to the preposterous argument of the *Athenæum* critic that the name Krishna, =black, might mean "anointed" because the root might mean "to tinge". Apart from that, the argument for a

[1] See it ably criticised in K. T. Telang's "Was the Râmâyana copied from Homer?" Bombay, 1873.

[2] "Modern Investigations on Ancient India." A Lecture delivered in Berlin, March 4th, 1854, by Professor A. Weber. Translated by Fanny Metcalfe, 1857, pp. 25–6. (*Indische Skizzen*, p. 28.)

reciprocal action of the two religions is on the face of it plausible enough; and it becomes necessary to go into the details.

In the above extract, Professor Weber indicates only two respects in which Krishnaism was in his opinion modified by Christianity—the doctrines, namely, of "a personal, universal God", and of "Faith". In his treatise on the Krishna Birth-Festival, he posits a number of concrete details: in particular, the Birth Festival itself; the representation of Krishna as a child suckled by his mother; the curious item that, at the time of Krishna's birth, his foster-father Nanda goes with his wife Yasoda to Mathura "to pay his taxes" (a detail not noted by the *Athenæum* critic); the representation of the babe as laid in a manger; the attempted killing by Kansa; the "massacre of the innocents"; the carrying of the child across the river (as in the Christian "Christophoros" legend); the miraculous doings of the child and the healing virtue of his bath water (as in the Apocryphal Gospels); the raising of the bereaved mother's dead son, the straightening of the crooked woman; her pouring ointment over Krishna; and the sin-removing power of his regard.[1] These concrete details I will first deal with.

§ 1. A most important admission, it will be remembered, has already been made by Professor Weber in regard to the story of King Kansa; which he admits to be now proved a pre-Christian myth. So important, indeed, is that withdrawal, that but for the Professor's later restatement I should have surmised him to have lost confidence in his whole position, of which, as it seems to me, the central citadel has fallen. If the story of Kansa be admittedly a pre-Christian myth, and the Christian Herod-story be thus admittedly a redaction of an old Eastern myth; what becomes of the presumption of Indian imitation of other Christian stories which, on the face of them, are just as likely to be mythical as the story of Herod and the massacre of the innocents? Did it ever occur to Professor Weber to consider how the Christian stories in general really originated? It would seem not. His argument simply assumes that the Gospel stories (whether true or not, he does not say) came into circulation at the

[1] Work cited, pp. 328-9.

foundation of Christianity, and so became accessible to the world. But as to the source of these stories—as to how these particular miraculous narratives came to be told in connexion with Jesus—he makes (save on one point) no inquiry and apparently feels no difficulty; though to a scientific eye, one would think, the clearing-up in some way of the *causation* of the Christian legends is as necessary as the explaining how they are duplicated in Krishnaism.

The one exception to which I allude in Professor Weber's investigation is his very straightforward allusion to the likelihood that the representation of the Virgin Mary as either suckling or clasping the infant Jesus may have been borrowed from the Egyptian statues or representations of Isis and Horus. For citing this suggestion from previous writers he has been angrily accused by Mr. Growse, a Roman Catholic Anglo-Indian, of "a wanton desire to give offence";[1] an imputation which the scholar has indignantly and justly resented.[2] Mr. Growse's pretext for his splenetic charge was the claim, cited by Professor Weber himself from De Rossi, that the earliest representations of the Madonna in the Roman catacombs, recently brought to light, follow a classic and not an Egyptian type. Says De Rossi:

"The paintings of our subterranean cemeteries offer us the first images of the Holy Virgin with her divine child; and they are much more numerous and more ancient than is indicated by the works hitherto [before 1863] published on the Catacombs of Rome. I have chosen four, which seem to me to be as the models of the different types and of the different periods which one meets from the first ages (*siècles*) to about the time of Constantine." And again (a passage which Weber does not cite); "The frescoes of our illustrations and the monuments cited by me here, demonstrate that on the most ancient works of Christian art the Virgin holding her child is figured *independently of the Magi and of any historic scene.*"[3]

Now, even if it be decided that the earliest "Madonnas" in the Catacombs have a classic rather than an Egyptian cast, nothing would be proved against the Egyptian deri-

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, iii, 300.
[2] *Id.*, iv, 251.
[3] *Images de la T. S. Vierge, Choisies dans les Catacombes de Rome*, Rome, 1863, pp. 6-7, 21.

vation of the cult of the Virgin and Child. It does not occur to Commendatore De Rossi, of course, to question whether these early Madonnas were really Christian—whether they did not represent the almost universal vogue of the worship of a child-nursing Goddess apart from Christianity. There is no valid documentary evidence whatever of Christian Madonna-worship in the first century; and De Rossi's "*premiers siècles*", and his final claim that his series of images "goes back to the disciples of the apostles", leave matters very much in the vague. The whole question of the antiquities of the Catacombs needs to be overhauled by some investigator as devoted as the Catholics, but as impartial as they are prejudiced. Certainly there might be Christian, but there might equally be non-Christian, "Madonnas" of a "classic" cast before the time at which the absolute images of Isis were transferred to Christian churches,[1] and black images of Mary and Jesus were made in imitation of these.[2] We know that in Græco-Roman statuary, Juno (Hera), who was fabled to become a virgin anew each year,[3] was represented as suckling a babe—Hercules or Dionysos.[4] Further, we know the Greeks had statues of Peace and Fortune each carrying Wealth as a child in her arms.[5] But further still we know that in old Assyria or Chaldæa there was a popular worship of a child-bearing Goddess. It is agreed that the Goddess Alitta was represented by such images;[6] and there are many specimens of similar ancient Eastern effigies of small size, which were evidently cherished by

[1] See King's "Gnostics", 2nd ed. p. 173.

[2] See above, sec. v.

[3] Pausanias, ii, 38. This myth often recurs. Juno bears Vulcan "without having been united in love" (Hesiod, "Theogony", 927); and in the same way bears Typhon (Homeric "Hymn to Apollo"). So, in Rome, Juno was identified with the *Virgo Coelestis* (Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, 1865, pp. 377, 752). The idea is ubiquitous. Cybele, the mother of *all* the Gods, was revered as a virgin, "generating without passion", though the mate as well as the mother of Jupiter, and "seized with a love without passion for Attis" (Julian, "Upon the Sovereign Sun", Bohn trans. p. 263). Equally transparent was the mysticism which made Ceres, the earth mother, a virgin too.

[4] Preller's *Griechische Mythologie*, 1860, i, 135; Pausanias, ix, 25.

[5] Pausanias, i, 8; ix, 16.

[6] Layard's "Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon", 1853, p. 477; Rawlinson's "Herodotus", i, 257.

multitudes. In a case of "Miscellaneous Objects from Assyria and Babylonia" in the Assyrian basement of the British Museum, may be seen old Chaldæan figures of this kind, one of which, with the usual orthodox British dissimulation, is described merely as a "female figure holding a child", while another female figure is unhesitatingly labelled "female deity", though the deity of the former is to the full as certain as that of the latter. In another case of "Antiquities from Dali" upstairs, at the outer end of the Egyptian Hall, are a number of similar figures, in the labelling of which officialdom ventures so far as to write "Figure of Female or Aphrodite", "holding smaller figure or child". Of course the Museum officials are not specially to blame: probably they dare not put facts as they would wish, for fear of the all-pervading clerical influence that in England hampers and humiliates archæology as it does every other science to the utmost of its power. Anyhow, the fact remains that these popular "Madonnas" of the East are much older than Christianity; and it is even probable that they represent a Chaldæan cultus much earlier than the Egyptian worship of Isis.

This being so, the course of surmising a Christian origin for Indian effigies of Devakî nursing Krishna is plainly unscientific, since it passes over an obvious, near, and probable source for a remote and improbable one. To argue that India remained ignorant of or indifferent to all *Asian* presentments of child-nursing Goddesses for many centuries, and at length, when she had a highly-evolved religious system, administered by an exclusive priesthood, suddenly became enamored of the Christian presentment of Mary and Jesus—this is to set aside all reasonable probability on no better pretext than a guess. Even if there were no old Asian cultus, no multitude of portable Asian images, of a child-bearing Goddess, the idea might obviously have been derived from the Isis-figures of Egypt before Christianity came into existence. Even from the engravings appended to his paper by Professor Weber, it appears that other divine personages than Devakî and Krishna were figured as mother and child in Hindu art and mythology; and the usage might perfectly well have prevailed in India before Krishnaism became anything like universal. In this connexion Professor Tiele,

sanest of hierologists,[1] passes an unanswerable criticism on Professor Weber's argument in the Dutch *Theologisch Tijdschrift*:

"One of the weakest points of his [Weber's] demonstration seems to me to be that in which he compares the delineations of Krishna at the breast of his mother Devakî with Christian pictures of the *Madonna lactans* (the Madonna giving suck), and both with that of Isis and Horos. For in the first place it is not proved that the Indian representations are imitations of Christian models: they might equally well be borrowed from the Egyptian, seeing that India was already in communication with Egypt before our era. The Horos sitting on the lotos was certainly borrowed by the Egyptians from Indian pictures; and in return the Isis with the child Horos at her breast may well have been transported to India. Moreover, the Indian illustrations given by Weber, and equally the Christian, are of very late date; and further, it is very doubtful whether they all represent Devaki and Krishna. [*Note.* Under one of the four is inscribed the name Lakshmi. Another is held to stand for Lakshmi or Maya with Kamadeva. In both the Goddesses have by them a lotus, the emblem of Lakshmi. And a third gives the whole legend, Devaki and Yaçodha each lying on her bed, the first strongly guarded, while the father of Krishna, under the protection of the serpent with seven heads, carries the child through the river, to place it in safety. Hardly one of the four recalls a *Madonna lactans*; but, indeed, Weber acknowledges that that is of very late date.]"[2]

I cannot, with my limited knowledge, speak with Professor Tiele's certainty as to the Horos-on-the-lotos being borrowed from India; but I would suggest that if that were so borrowed, the Isis nursing Horos might be so likewise. We have really no solid ground, that I know of, for assuming that the Indian cult, in some form, was not as old as the Egyptian. We have the decisive testimony of Jerome that in the fourth century the Hindus

[1] Let me offer a plea, as well as an excuse, for this most necessary term, which Professor Tiele himself has fathered. It is in the preface to his "Outlines" that he suggests the word "hierology" as a substitute for the cumbrous phrase "Science of Religions". If this term be adopted, we might when necessary say "Comparative Hierology" instead of "Comparative Mythology", and so satisfy conservatives without having recourse to the question-begging "Comparative Theology", or to the solecism of "Comparative Religion", which is no more justifiable than "Comparative Words" for "Comparative Philology".

[2] Art. *Christus en Krishna*, in the *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1877, p. 65.

were known to teach that their Buddha was born of a Virgin[1]—a clear proof that the Virgin myth was current in India before our era. Such a dogma could not have gained such vogue in the short time between Jerome and the beginning of Mary-worship. If then Buddha was so early reputed Virgin-born, why should not Krishna, who ranked as an incarnation of Vishnu before him, have long earlier had the same distinction? Surely that is the reasonable assumption. What is clear, however, is that, as Professor Tiele urges, the Hindus could perfectly well have borrowed, if they did borrow, from Egypt before Christianity was heard of. There being thus so little reason for surmising Christian influence in the matter, and so much for discarding any such surmise, there is *a fortiori* presumption against Professor Weber's final contention as to the precise time of borrowing. There is a Krishnaist custom in India of "name-giving" on the festival day of Krishna's supposed birth; and in answer to criticism the Professor writes[2] that "It is because the custom of the Egyptian Church of celebrating the birth and the baptism of Christ on the *same day* prevailed only from the second half of the fourth century till the year 431, when the celebration of the *birth alone* took its place," that he dates the Krishnaist borrowing of the Birth Festival from Christianity "at the very time during which that custom peculiar to Egypt prevailed." Here we have perhaps the most striking example of Professor Weber's unscientific treatment of Christian origins. Why, one asks, does he not enquire as to how the Egyptian Christians came to adopt that peculiar usage of celebrating the birth and baptism of Christ on one day, for only the short period he speaks of? Was it a mere freak? And if it were, is it reasonable to suggest that this mere temporary provincial ecclesiastical freak in Christendom somehow impressed the remote Brahmans so much that they determined to adopt it, and succeeded in grafting it on the Krishna cultus ever since? Surely this is turning historical science out of doors! Surely it is infinitely more reasonable to surmise that the Egyptian Christians were the borrowers, that they borrowed

[1] "Adversus Jovinianum", i, 42 (Migne, *Patrol. Cursus Completus*, xxiii, 273).

[2] *Indian Antiquary*, iv, 249; *Ueber die Krishnaj.*, pp. 299, 337.

their peculiar usage from some other cult, and that it was rejected by the rest of the Church just because it was so obviously alien in its origin.

To be sure, the usage of the rest of the Church was itself an unquestionable adoption of a current Pagan one. The Western Church, long after the time when the possibility of ascertaining any facts as to the birth of the alleged Founder had ceased, adopted the ancient solar festival of the 25th of December, then specially connected in the Empire with the widespread worship of Mithra.[1] But the Eastern Churches, influenced by the Egyptian and other pre-Christian systems, adopted and for some time adhered to another date, equally solar and Pagan in its character. The facts are collected by Bingham, who points out that it "is a very great mistake in learned men" to say that Christ's birthday was always celebrated on 25th December by the churches:—

"For, not to mention what Clement Alexandrinus (*Stromata*, i) says of the Basilidian heretics, that they asserted that Christ was born on the 24th or 25th of the month which the Egyptians call Pharmuthi, that is, April; he says a more remarkable thing (*Id.*) of some others, who were more curious about the year and the day of Christ's nativity, which they said was in the twenty-eighth year of Augustus Cæsar, and the 25th day of the month Pachon, which . . . . signifies the month of May, as Mr. Basnage (*Exercit. in Baron. an.* 37, p. 216) has at large demonstrated. . . . . But what is more considerable in this matter is that the greatest part of the Eastern Church for three or four of the first ages kept the feast of Christ's nativity on the same day which is now called Epiphany, or the 6th of January, which denotes Christ's manifestation to the world in four several respects which were all commemorated upon this day"—*i.e.* (1) his nativity or incarnation; (2) the appearance of the star,=Epiphany or manifestation to the Gentiles; (3) the "glorious appearance" at Christ's baptism: (4) the manifestation of his divinity at Cana. . . . . "And Cassian (*Collat.* x, c. 2) says expressly 'that in his time all the Egyptian provinces under the general name of Epiphany understood as well the nativity of Christ as his baptism.' . . . . But before the time of the Council of Ephesus, anno 431, the Egyptians had altered the day of Christ's nativity. . . . . It was not long before this that the

[1] See Julian "Upon the Sovereign Sun", Bohn trans. pp. 249-251. Cp. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, p. 755.

churches of Antioch and Syria came into the Western observation[1]". . . .

All which is abundantly proved from Epiphanius and Chrysostom. Now, only a supernaturalist criticism can here fail to see that the usages of the Egyptian and Syrian churches were imitative of pre-existing Eastern astronomico-theological cults;[2] and if we are driven to this conclusion, what right have we left to suppose that India borrowed just such a usage all of a sudden from a short-lived borrowed practice of Eastern Christendom? We have a distinct record that in connexion with the ancient solar worship of Hercules among the Sicyonians, who sacrificed lambs to the God, "the first of the days of the Feast which they keep to Hercules they call *Names*, and the second *Hercules' Day*";[3] and there is surely good reason to presume that similar usages prevailed among other solar cults long before Christianity. Why then should the Hindu usage not be as old as the Greek? The position is hopeless. Professor Weber's thesis (and Professor Weber is the only person with whom it is worth while to argue seriously on the subject) is extravagant to the last degree. In no other connexion could such a capricious hypothesis meet with acceptance; it is only anxiety to prove Christian priority by hook or crook that can induce any reader to endorse Professor Weber's view; and it is only, I submit, the habit of uncritically acquiescing, however honestly, in Christian assumptions, that could lead such a scholar to frame such an argument. He is hoist with his own petard, and his Christian followers with him. These might indeed have pointed out to him that the usage of *general baptising on Epiphany* did not disappear from the Christian Church after the Council of Ephesus. It has been continued down to modern times in the Church of Abyssinia, which has continued to receive its primate from the Church of Alexandria, and which practises general circumcision as well as general baptism on the day in question.[4] Why should not then

[1] "Christian Antiquities", ed. 1855, vii, 280-2.

[2] The Cana wine-miracle, commemorated on January 18th, is certainly based on the wine-miracle of the Dionysiak festival of that date (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* ii, 106 (103), xxxi, 13; Pausanias, vi, 26).

[3] Pausanias, ii, 10.

[4] Geddes, "Church History of Ethiopia", 1696, pp. 32-33.

the Hindu usage have been borrowed from Abyssinia at a much later time than that at which the Alexandrian Church regarded Epiphany as the day of the Nativity? Why indeed should it not have been suggested by the much more general custom in the early Church of reserving all baptisms for Easter-day?[1] And why, finally, should it not have been suggested by the Catholic "Festival of the Name of Jesus", which stands in the Calendar for August 7th, close on the date of the Krishna Birth-Festival? Any one of these hypotheses would be as reasonable as that on which Professor Weber has fastened —as reasonable, and as unreascnable. The whole theory is a fallacy.

§ 2. A more instructive part of Professor Weber's argument concerning the Krishna Birth-Festival, as now observed in India, consists in showing that no trace of it is to be found even in such late literature as the Purânas. An attempt to find authority for it in the Bhâgavat Purâna, he declares, entirely fails, except as regards quite modern MSS.; and this he considers the more curious because this Purâna, and in particular the tenth book, is the peculiar text-book of the Krishna sect. There is there no suggestion of a Birth-Festival. The time of the God's birth, he mentions, is told in detail in Book x, 3, 1–8, but without a date, save what is implied in the statement that it was under the star Rohinî and at midnight; and he raises the question whether the Birth-Festival existed at the time of the composition of the Purâna. He decides that it must have done, not on account of internal evidence proving the lateness of the book, but because the grammarian Vopadeva, to whom Colebrooke, Wilson, and Burnouf ascribe the composition of the Purâna as it now stands, was contemporary with Hemâdri, the author in whom we first find specific mention of the Festival. That was about the end of the fourteenth century of our era—about a thousand years after the period at which the Professor thinks the Hindus borrowed their Festival usage from Alexandria. He might thus well decide that the usage existed before Vopadeva; and he offers

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Cp. Neale, "History of the Holy Eastern Church: Patriarchate of Alexandria", 1847, ii, 347.

[1] Bingham, Work cited, iv, 69-70.

an explanation of the silence of the Purâna on the subject:

"In the Bhagavat Purâna is presented the modern development of the Krishna cult, which is chiefly concerned with Krishna's love affairs, and in which the Mother of the God passes progressively into the background. In the Birthday Festival, on the other hand, ... the Mother comes very prominently into the foreground, playing a principal rôle, while of the love affairs of Krishna no notice is or indeed can be taken, for he is here represented as still a suckling at his mother's breast. I do not hesitate here to recognise a quite peculiarly ancient phase of the Festival, the more so because . . . . even in that there appears in time a tendency to suppress this side, and to give the tribute of the Festival to the God alone, without his mother."[1]

That is to say, the Purâna overlooks the Festival because it preserves the old practice of honoring the Mother of the God, while at the time the Purâna was written the cult ran to the glorification of the God himself, and the celebration of his exploits. To this explanation I do not think there can be any objection. It is conceived in the historical spirit; and my only perplexity is that Professor Weber, while thus recognising that the Festival preserves an old *popular rite*, which changed much more slowly than the poetic recitals of the God's exploits, should yet decide that even the popular rite was originally borrowed from the new Western religion of Christism by a people who rated their own religious and historic antiquity high before Christianity was heard of.

I have implied that the Purânas represent the literary development of mythic lore; but this does not mean that even their contents are not mainly made up of matter that in some form long antedates our era. On this subject, it may be well to point out that the absolute preservation of an ancient document in its integrity, unless it be a matter of rote-learned ritual like the Vedas, is not to be looked for in a state of civilisation in which manuscripts are not abundant and the knowledge of reading general. There is overwhelming internal evidence of the manipulation of the Christian Gospels: and the reason why, after a certain time, their text became substantially fixed, was just the multiplicity of the copies, and the ecclesiastical habit,

[1] *Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî*, pp. 240-2.

derived from old Greek political usage, of meeting in Councils. And even as it was, we know that so late as the fifth century the text of the "three witnesses" was fraudulently inserted in 1 John v, and that this one forgery was ultimately accepted by the entire Western church from about 1550 down to last century, when earlier copies were authoritatively collated. Now, in India down till recent times, the frame of mind in regard to narratives of the lives of the Gods would be exactly that of the early Christians who manipulated the first and second Gospels, and compiled the third and fourth. There was no such thing as a canon or a received text: there was no "apostolic" tradition; there were no religious councils; no scholars whose business it was to compare manuscripts. Besides, no manuscript lasted long; Professor Weber has pointed out how unfavorable is the Indian climate to any such preservation.[1] In fine, the *re*-composition of sacred narratives would be a perfectly natural course. But it would be fallacious in the extreme to argue that a late redaction meant late invention: on the contrary there is good reason to believe that late redactions would often take in floating popular myths of great antiquity, which had merely missed being committed to writing before. For this view, modern research in Folk Lore should have prepared all investigators. Our every day nursery fables are found to be in substance as old as the art of story-telling, older than literature, as old as religion.

Now, it is a general rule in ancient mythology that the birthdays of Gods were *astrological*; and the simple fact that the Purâna gives an astronomical moment for Krishna's birth is a sufficient proof that at the time of writing they *had* a fixed date for it. The star Rohinî under which he was born, it will be remembered, has the name given in one variation of the Krishna legend to a wife of Vasudeva who bore to him Râma, as Devakî (sometimes held to be the mother of Râma also) bore Krishna. Here we are in the thick of ancient astrological myth. Rohinî (our Aldebaran) is "the red", "a mythical name also applied now to Aurora, now to a star".[2] We have seen in the case of Christianity

[1] *Ind. Ant.*, iii, 246; Berlin lecture, p. 30. A friend in Burma, to whom I had sent a book, writes me that it has to be locked up in an air-tight box during the wet season, otherwise it would be destroyed.

[2] Barth, "Religions of India", p. 173.

how a universal astrological festival, of immemorial antiquity, came to be specialised for Christians; and it is clearly not only possible but likely that every astrological festival of Krishnaism was in vogue in other Indian worships before Krishnaism prevailed. In these matters there is really no invention: there is only readjustment. But that a Hindu festival connected with the star-name Rohinî and the birth of Krishna should be borrowed from Christianity, I can see no shadow of reason for supposing. The very fact that no account is given in the older Purânas of the rise of the festival tells in favor of its antiquity. Suppose the festival to be the oldest datum in the case, the omission to date its beginning in the record is just what would happen—just what happened in Christianity. It would have been a simple matter for the early Christians to insert 25th December in their records as the date of their God's birth; but they did *not* do so, just because that was so notoriously a festival of extreme antiquity.[1]

But the most singular matter in regard to Professor Weber's argument is the fact that the date of the Krishna Birth-Festival is neither in December nor in January, but in the month of *July*.[2] One may go through Weber's treatise without discovering this. As he says in answer to a criticism, "The date itself (December or July, midwinter or midsummer) *plays no part at all in my discussion*, and is only

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[1] It is worth while in this connexion to recal the statement of Ovid in his *Fasti* (i, 657) that he went three or four times through the official list of festivals, in vain, looking for the date of the old Sementivæ or Festival of Sowing, which was not written down. See Ovid's explanation and that of Macrobius (*Saturnalia*, i, 16) cited by Keightley in his ed. of the *Fasti*. There were fixed and unfixed festivals, *Stativæ* and *Conceptivæ*, of which the latter were "annually given out, for certain or even uncertain days, by the magistrates or priests".

[2] According to Professor de Gubernatis (Zool. Myth. i, 51) it is customary "towards the end of December" to give presents of cows "in celebration of the new solar year, *or the birth of the pastoral God Krishnas*"; but this appears to be an error, probably resulting from Professor Weber's omission to lay stress on the date in his standard treatise. But doubtless Gubernatis could explain the midsummer birth of the black Sun-God in terms of solar mythology. It is the white Sun-God who is born at Christmas. But on this head it should be noted that the *death* of the Sun-God Tammuz (Adonis) was celebrated in different climates at different times. See Müller, as last cited, pp. 529–530. And see hereinafter, Sec. 15.

spoken of incidentally" in a parenthesis.[1] So the proposition is that the Hindus celebrated the birthday of Krishna in July by way of imitating the Christian fashion of celebrating Christ's nativity in January. One is at a loss to understand how Professor Weber can thus make so light of such an important item. If the Krishna Birth-Festival were borrowed, why should the borrowers select a midsummer instead of a midwinter date for their importation? Why, indeed, should they not place their God's birthday, if it only occurred to them late in the day to give him a birthday, on one of the other Krishnaist festivals? I have not noticed that Professor Weber theorises on the origin of these; but their probably astronomical origin is surely important to the argument. As the historian Elphinstone has pointed out, "Even Mr. Bentley, the most strenuous opponent of the claims of the Hindus" to an extremely ancient knowledge of astronomy, "pronounces in his latest work that their division of the ecliptic into twenty-seven lunar mansions (which supposes much previous observation) was made 1442 years before our era"[2]—that is, one or two centuries before the first traces of systematic astronomy in Greece. Astronomical festivals, then, the Hindus must have had from a very remote antiquity;[3] and every argument from analogy and experience goes to support the view that their now popular seasonal festivals are prehistoric, and that some of them may even be derived from Dravidian or pre-Aryan practice. And when we compare a few of their usages with those of Christianity, it becomes plain that we must either suppose them to have borrowed a great deal more than Professor Weber says, or give up his theory altogether and look for, if anything, a reverse historic process. The points of resemblance are numerous and suggestive.

"The new year of the luni-solar computation now in use [in India] begins with the first of Chaitra, which falls somewhere in the course of March, and in solar reckoning is said to agree with the entrance of the sun into the sign Mesha, or Aries"[4]—

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, iv, 249.

[2] "History of India," ed. 1866, p. 140.

[3] On Vedic festivals see Professor Max Müller's "Natural Religion", 1889, pp. 524-5.

[4] H. H. Wilson, "Religious Festivals of the Hindus," Works, ii, 159.

that is, the sign of the Ram or Lamb, which in Christianity is associated with the sacrifice of the God, symbolised as a Lamb, on a luni-solar and therefore variable date connected with the vernal equinox.

"There was, however, a period at which a different principle was followed[1] . . . . the new year then commenced on the first of the solar month Màgha, the date of the Makara-Sankràntì, or the sun's entrance into the sign Capricornus, identical with the Uttarâyana, or return of that luminary to the regions of the north, or, in fact, to the winter solstice."[2]

The Indian and European dates do not actually correspond: with us 21st December is the time of the sun's entering Capricorn, the sign of the Goat, while the Hindus put it on the first of their solar month Magha=12th January. But the astronomical *motive* is explicit; and when we note that this old festival, still in force, lasts three days, and that the day after the sun's entering Capricorn is termed Máttu Pongal, or the feast of cattle, we see a new confirmation of the argument of Dupuis[3] that the myth of the Christian God being born in a stable (which corresponds so strikingly with many other myths of Gods—as Krishna, Mercury, Hercules—born or brought up among cattle) is really at bottom astronomical or zodiacal, and is properly to be traced to the relative position of the figures in the fuller zodiac or celestial sphere. Of course the solar element is manifest in the Hindu usage. "The day of the Makara Sankránti, or Perum Pongal, is dedicated to the sun, and the day of Mattu Pongal to Indra; they are both comprised in the term Pongal, which is in an anniversary festival of a week's duration."[4] Now, several of the usages in this and other Hindu festivals are traceable in Europe in non-Christian as well as in Christian times. "The Greeks had a festival in the month Poseidon or January, in which they worshipped Neptune, or the Sea, in like manner as the Hindus [at the same time] worship the ocean."[5] But there is no more remarkable correspondence than that between the Hindu practice of honoring the cattle at this time and the strange Catholic function of

[1] *Note by Wilson.* According to Bentley, this was 1181 B.C. "Historical View of Hindu Astronomy," p. 30.

[2] Wilson, as cited.

[3] "Origine de tous les Cultes," ed. 1835-6, vii, 104.

[4] Wilson, as cited, p. 172.

[5] *Id.* p. 175.

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blessing the cattle—cows, horses, goats, asses, etc—at Rome on St. Anthony's day (January 17th). Let Professsor Wilson testify :—

"The time of the year, the decorating of the cattle, the sprinkling of them with water, and the very purport of the blessing, that they may be exempt from evils, are so decidedly Indian, that could a Dravira Brahman be set down of a sudden in the Piazza, and were he asked what ceremony he witnessed, there can be no doubt of his answer: he would at once declare they were celebrating the Pongal." [1]

Now, can any rational enquirer believe that the Roman Catholic usage really originated, as the fable tells, in the fact that St. Anthony tended swine? These are the theories of the Dark Ages. To-day even semi-orthodox scholarship decides that

"So far as myths consist of explanations of ritual their value is altogether secondary; and it may be affirmed with confidence that in almost every case *the myth was derived from the ritual, and not the ritual from the myth;* for the ritual was fixed and the myth was variable; the ritual was obligatory, and faith in the myth was at the discretion of the worshipper ".[2]

This holds true for every religion; and if we apply the principle in the case of Christianity we shall make an end of more pretences than that as to the borrowing of Christian practices by Krishnaism. It is not argued, of course, that Roman Christianity borrowed its ritual usages direct from India: on the contrary, the presumption is that these usages were even more widespread than the Aryan race in pre-historic times. The Roman Catholic celebration of St. Anthony's day probably derives from the ancient Paganalia or Feriæ Sementivæ, agricultural festivities in which the cattle were garlanded at this very season of the year;[3] and it is possible that even the modern name came from that of one of the Antonines. But if Christianity is thus seen deriving its festival days from immemorial custom, what reason is there to surmise that conservative and custom-loving India came to Alexandria for the hint to celebrate the astrological birthday of Krishna? Krishna-

[1] Wilson, as cited, pp. 178-9.

[2] Professor Robertson Smith, "The Religion of the Semites," 1889, p. 19.

[3] See Ovid, *Fasti*, i, 663. Cp. Middleton, "Letter from Rome," ed. 1741, pp. xv–xix, and 141–143.

ism has a number of festivals, of which no proper account seems yet to be accessible in English, that given in Balfour's *Indian Cyclopædia* being so inexact that one is at a loss to know whether in some cases different festival-names do not apply to one and the same feast. But it is clear that there is one great Dolu or Dola Yâtrâ festival, the "swinging festival", which begins about the middle of March (Phalguna) and lasts as a rule fifteen days. In the large British towns it is or was restricted to three days on account of the liberties taken; but among the Rajputs it is or was the practice to celebrate it for forty days,[1] with more or less licence. Now, this practice has certainly an astronomical or seasonal origin; and is as certainly akin to, and as old as, the ancient celebration of the Dionysia or Liberalia in honor of the Sun and Wine-God among the Greeks and Romans. The 17th of March was the date of the Liberalia in Rome; and licence was the note of the festival. It would be just as reasonable to derive the Indian "swinging-festival"[2] of the vernal equinox from the Christian celebration of the rising of Christ from the dead, as to argue that the Krishna Birth-Festival is similarly derived.

XI.

The further we collate the main Christian myth-motives with those of Krishnaism, the more clearly does it appear that instead of the latter being borrowed from the former, they are, not indeed in all cases the originals from which Christianity borrowed, but always presumptively the more

[1] Rev. W. O. Simpson's ed. of Moor's "Hindu Pantheon", 1864, pp. 139–144.

[2] So called because of the ritual practice of swinging an image in a chair. But this practice, according to Balfour's *Ind. Cyc.* (art. Krishna) would appear to obtain also at another Krishnaite festival of three or five days' duration in the month Shravana = July-August; which I take to be either the Birth Festival proper or the special form of it called *Jayantî*, which depends on a particular conjunction of the star Rohinî (Weber, p. 221; cp. pp. 262-3). On this I can find no exact information. In the month Kartika=October-November, there is yet another festival, celebrating the Gopî revels. In a note to Wilson's "Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus" (1835, ii, 264), citing the Bhavishyottara Purâna, it is

ancient; and in one or two cases they do appear to be the actual sources of Gospel stories. We have seen how Professor Weber concedes that the story of King Kansa's killing of Devakî's earlier children in the attempt to kill Krishna is not only pre-Christian but of old mythic standing, and that it was the subject of *dramatic representations* before our era. Now, the myth-motive in question is at bottom one that is extremely familiar in ancient legend; and nothing is more unsatisfactory in the modern discussion of Krishnaite origins than the way in which this fact has been overlooked. About a hundred years ago Maurice[1] called attention to the parallel between the story of Krishna's infancy and that of the infancy of Cyrus, as told by Herodotus,[2] four hundred years before our era. The story about Cyrus is briefly as follows. Astyages, king of the Medes, having had a remarkable (and Rabelaisian) dream about his daughter, which portended great things of her progeny, gave her in marriage to a Persian of private station, named Cambyses. A year after her marriage, when she was pregnant, he had a still more alarming if less unmentionable dream, whereupon he sent to Persia for her and put her under a guard, resolving to destroy whatever should be born of her; the Magi having signified that his dream meant that her offspring would reign in his stead. The officer (Harpagus) whom he entrusted with the task, however, shrank from the act, sent for one of the king's cowherds, Mitradates, and ordered him to expose the child on a mountain abounding in wild beasts. All the same, the child was clothed in "gold and a robe of various colors". When the herdsman got home, his wife had just been delivered of a still-born child; and they agreed to give up its body to Harpagus as that of the young prince, dead from exposure, while they actually reared the prince as their own child, giving him another name than Cyrus. When the child grows to boyhood, he of course reveals royal quali-

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explained that many of the Hindu festivals have been displaced. Thus a festival once named the Holikâ is now termed the Dola Yâtrâ (or "swinging of the Gods"); and "the Dola Yâtrâ and Rath Yâtrâ have also been displaced, and in Bengal, at least, transferred to festivals appropriated to Krishna alone, in the months of Jyeshth and Asharh, June–July".

[1] "History of Hindostan," ii, 478. [2] B. i, 107–130.

ties; and while "playing in the village in which the ox stalls were" he is chosen by the other boys as their king, and causes a disobedient playfellow to be scourged. This Astyages discovers, and the story comes out. Astyages punishes Harpagus by causing him unknowingly to eat the flesh of his own child; but is told by the Magi that as his dream has been already fulfilled in the coronation of Cyrus by the village children, he may safely let him go. Later, of course, Harpagus secretly helps Cyrus to make an insurrection; Astyages impales the Magi, but gives the command of his troops to Harpagus, who betrays him, and Cyrus reigns, but without killing his grandfather. Of Cyrus' death, Herodotus tells, there were many accounts; and in one of these[1] he is declared to have been *crucified* by an Amazon queen of Scythians.

Here, then, we have an old myth, in which already, however, certain primeval mythical details are seen modified to suit history. Thus the herdsman's wife's name means "the bitch"; and it is explained that this is how the story arose of Cyrus being suckled by a bitch—a myth which at once recals the story of Romulus and Remus, suckled by a she-wolf; and of Jupiter, suckled by the she-goat Amalthea.[2] Again, the secret message from Harpagus in Media to Cyrus in Persia is sent enclosed in the body of a hare—an animal which in early mythology repeatedly plays the part of a message-bringer.[3] And the robe "of many colors", is, like Joseph's coat, plainly the many-tinted cloud-drapery of the Sun. Apart from these details, the story of the exposure of the infant hero is plainly cognate with the legends of the exposure of Romulus; of Æsculapius,[4] exposed as a child, found by Autolaus and nursed by Trygon (= "the turtle-dove"?[5]), or, in another myth, suckled by a she-goat and protected by a watch-dog;[6] and of Moses, the circumstances of whose exposure are so strikingly recalled by the Jesuist story of the massacre of the innocents; and parts of the

[1] Diodorus Siculus, ii, 44.

[2] Callimachus, "Hymn to Jupiter", 49.

[3] Gubernatis, "Zoological Mythology", ii, 77, 79.

[4] Pausanias, viii, 25.

[5] The mythical Semiramis was fabled to have been exposed for a whole year in the desert, and nourished by doves. Compare the ravens of Elijah.

[6] Pausanias, ii, 26.

tale are found closely paralleled in the northern legend of British Arthur, as well as in that of Œdipus.[1] The child Arthur, like Cyrus, is robed in gold, and like him is secretly sent to be suckled by one not his mother.[2] But with all this parallelism to account for, Professor Weber and the Christian partisans have assumed out-of-hand that the story of Krishna's nativity was just taken from the Gospels, leaving the Gospel story to stand by its own sacrosanctity. In point of fact there is hardly a leading detail in the Krishna birth legend which is not paralleled in other early non-Christian mythology. In the Greek pantheon, God after God is found to have been reared under difficulties. Latona, pregnant with Apollo, is driven from place to place by the jealous hate of Juno.[3] The infant Dionysos, son of Ammon and Amalthea, is sent by his father to a secluded island, and guarded by the virgin Goddess Athena from the jealous wrath of Rhea, the wife of Ammon.[4] In another version, Semele, who bears Dionysos to Zeus, is spirited away with her child in a chest by Cadmus: the chest is thrown in the sea and cast ashore; Semele, found dead, is buried; and the wandering Io (who in the common myth is a cow) rears the child in a cave.[5] Similarly, Zeus himself in his infancy is stolen away by the Curetes from fear of his father Kronos (Saturn) and nursed by the nymphs Ithome and Neda;[6] while in the more familiar story Kronos devours his children successively, fearing they will dispossess him, till Rhea his wife gives him a stone wrapped in cloth, which he devours in place of the new-born Jupiter, whom she brings forth in a distant place and rears in a cave, and who in turn overthrows his father, as Cyrus overthrows Astyages.[7] Yet again, when Rhea bears Poseidon (Neptune), he is "deposited with the flocks and fed with the lambs"; and in this case she gives Kronos a foal to eat.[8] In yet another story, Æsculapius narrowly escapes being burned alive with his mother Coronis.[9]

[1] Cox, "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," 1882, pp. 134, 312.
[2] Malory's "Mort d'Arthure", chap. iii.
[3] Callimachus, "Hymn to Delos".
[4] Diodorus Siculus, iii, 68, 70.
[5] Pausanias, iii, 24. [6] Id. iv, 33.
[7] Hesiod, *Theogony*, 477–491; Pausanias, viii, 8.
[8] Last cit. [9] Pausanias, ii, 26.

Needless to speak of the serpents sent by Juno against the infant Hercules, and the battling of the young Horus against Typhon: the myth is universal. And yet we are asked to believe that an Indian variant of this myth, closely resembling one current in Persia ages before Christ, is wholly or partly borrowed from the Christian Gospels, canonical and apocryphal.

I have not seen any detailed statement of what elements in Krishnaism are supposed by Christians to be taken from the apocryphal gospels; but more than one item in these is obviously borrowed from prior myths. Thus the story of the God being born in a cave[1] is anticipated in the case of Hermes and Dionysos, and in the cave-worships of Adonis and Mithra.[2] But further, the account of Jesus as being chosen king by his playfellows,[3] is clearly based on or akin to the Cyrus legend, above recapitulated; and the various accounts of his games with his comrades, which seem to be regarded as having suggested the Gopi revels of Krishna, are similarly indicated in Herodotus; the killing of a boy by Jesus[4] being mildly paralleled in the chastising of a boy by Cyrus, as again more completely in the killing of an Egyptian by Moses.[5] What is the precise historic relation between the Krishna and the Cyrus[6] legends is still uncertain, though the connexion is undoubtedly close;[7] but on any view the Christian claim is out of the question. The obviously mythical Christian story of the massacre of the innocents by Herod[8] was doubtless concocted by blending the legend of the child massacre by

[1] Protevangelion, xii, 14; 1 Infancy, i, 6–20; xii, 14.

[2] See the present writer's lecture on "Mithraism", in *Time*, April, 1889, p. 426.

[3] 1 Infancy, xviii, 1, 7.

[4] 1 Infancy, xix, 24; 2 Inf. ii, 9.

[5] Exodus, ii, 12.

[6] This name, so much altered by our pronouncing the "C" as "S", is in the Greek (Κυρος, Küros) and the Persian Cosroe (perhaps from Coresh, the Sun) sufficiently like Krishna to be at least as capable of connexion with that as the name Christ.

[7] "As Laios [father of Œdipus] in the Theban myth is the enemy, Dasyu, of the devas or bright Gods, so is Astyages only a Græcised form of Ashadag, the Azidahaka or biting snake of Hindu legend and the Zohak of the epic of Firdusi." Cox, "Mythology of the Aryan Nations", p. 324.

[8] As a sample of the fashion in which the cause of Christianity has been maintained in this country, I may cite the old statement of the

Pharaoh[1] with the legend of the quasi-Messianic, doom-escaping, and finally crucified Cyrus, who stood high in Jewish esteem as a liberator of the captive race and a believer in their God;[2] and adding the prophecy of Zoroaster.[3] The item of the God being hastily transported or born on a journey, again, is plainly a phase of the universal and presumably astronomical myth; and though the myth-necessity of taking Jesus to Bethlehem might account for that detail, the flight into Egypt is mythically gratuitous. In the old stories, Mandanê comes from Persia to be delivered in Media; Rhea goes to bear Zeus in Crete; Latona wanders far to bear Apollo, and Themis[4] nurses him; Isis wanders, Demeter wanders; Juno goes "far away" from Zeus to conceive and bear Typhon;[5] Hagar goes into the wilderness to bear Ishmael; the daughter of Phlegyas follows her roving father far to bear Æsculapius;[6] the mother of the deified Apollonius of Tyana is told in a dream to go into a meadow, and there she is delivered of her child;[7] and in the Buddha legend, Maya (who becomes pregnant at the age of forty-five, a period about as late for India as that of the pregnancy of Sarah would be for Easterns) bears her holy child under a palm-tree (as Latona bears Apollo,[8] and as Mary does Jesus in the Koran)[9] on her way to her father's house.[10]

Rev. Mr. Maurice ("Hist. of Hindostan," ii, 298-9) that the argument of Origen with Celsus shows that the Jews of that day did not dispute the story of the massacre. The fact is that Origen explicitly says (i, 61) that "the Jew of Celsus" denies the story.

[1] Exod., i, 15-22.

[2] Ezra i; iii, 7; iv, 3; v, 13; vi, 3; Isaiah xliv, 28; xlv, 1; Daniel vi, 28; etc.

[3] 1 Infancy, iii, 1.

[4] Homeric "Hymn to Apollo", 124; Callimachus, as cited.

[5] "Hymn to Apollo", 326–331. [6] Pausanias, ii, 26.

[7] Philostratus' "Life of Apollonius", i, 5. Compare the odd legend of the Epidaurians near the temple of Æsculapius, whose women till the time of Antonine must be delivered in the open air (Pausanias, ii, 27).

[8] "Hymn to Apollo", 117; Theognis, l. 5; Callimachus, "Hymn to Delos," l. 208; Pliny, Nat. Hist. xiv, 44.

[9] Sura xix,—"Mary". Rodwell's trans. 1861, p. 129.

[10] Professor Rhys Davids, who, with M. Senart's work before him, cannot yet recognise the mythic elements in the Buddha legend, treats this episode as historic ("Buddhism", p. 26); and even alleges that it was "in accordance with custom" that Maya went to be delivered in her father's house. His book is in this regard pre-scientific.

Of course there are variations. Maya dies, and Buddha is suckled by her sister, as we have seen so many of the Greek Gods were suckled by nurses; whereas Mary lives and keeps her child; but when Professor Weber assumes that the carrying of Krishna across the river is borrowed from the "Christophoros" legend, he not only overlooks the mythological significance of the river, elsewhere mentioned by himself, but the whole legend of Cyrus, which presents the close parallel of the herdsman's wife being delivered at the same time as Mandanê, as Yasoda bears a child simultaneously with Devakî. And, as he himself points out twice in his treatise,[1] the river figures in the Krishnaite ritual as the serpent or "serpent-prince", Kaliya, a motive not found in the gospels. On the other hand, however, when the Professor would derive from the third Gospel the item of Nanda's journey to Mathurâ to pay his taxes, we are entitled to meet him with the converse proposition that here at least it is the Christian Gospel that borrows from the Hindu drama.

The gospel story of Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem to be taxed under the edict of Augustus is obviously myth: there was no such practice in the Roman world; and in any case Galilee was still independently governed by Herod-Antipas when Quirinius went to tax Judea. Only the late third Gospel tells the story: the narrative in Matthew, added late as it was to the original composition, which obviously began at what is now the third chapter, has no hint of the taxing, but implies that Joseph and Mary lived at Bethlehem; the Gospel of Mary gives the visit without the taxing; and so loosely was the myth credited that in the Protevangelion (xii, 1) the statement is that it was decreed "that all the Jews should be taxed, who were of Bethlehem in Judea". In that story, Jesus is born on the journey, in the cave, three miles from Bethlehem (xii, 5); and it is after being taken from the cave that he is laid by his mother at Bethlehem "in an ox-manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (xvi, 2).[2] Now, if the Krishna legend is clearly

[1] *Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî*, pp. 249, 280. It is further noteworthy that the Yamunâ (*i.e.*, the Jumna) has long had the poetic name of *Kâlindî*,="daughter of Kalinda", which last is a name of the sun (Wilson, "Theatre of the Hindus," 1835, i, 302; ii, 90).

[2] In the "History of Joseph the Carpenter", which follows Luke

bound up with the long pre-Christian legend of Cyrus, why should we here suppose that its taxing-journey motive is borrowed from Christianity, instead of *vice versa*? The latter is plainly the reasonable hypothesis. In the Purâna story, Vasudeva, crossing the river Yamunâ, whose waters are stilled and lowered, with the babe Krishna in his arms, sees on the bank "Nanda and the rest, who had come hither to bring tribute due to Kansa".[1] The Bhagavat Purâna version "more consistently makes Vasudeva find Nanda and the rest fast asleep in their houses; and subsequently describes their bringing tribute or tax (*Kara*) to Kansa".[2] Again, in the Vishnu Purâna, the liberated Vasudeva goes "to the waggon of Nanda";[3] and in the Bhâgavat he "does not quit Mathurâ, but goes to the halting ground of Nanda, who has come to that city to pay his taxes". On the exhortation of Vasudeva to go, "Nanda and the other cowherds, their goods being placed in their waggons, and their taxes having been paid to the king, returned to their village". Here is a detailed and circumstantial narrative, which, with its variations, we may with considerable confidence assume to have formed part of those dramatic representations of the birth of Krishna which, on the evidence of Patanjali's Commentary, are established as having flourished before our era. The Hindu story is detailed and dramatic, though of course grafted on a myth motive: the Christian story, given in one only, and that the latest, of the Synoptics, is either a mere myth-echo or is introduced in order to give a basis for the mythical birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, which the second Gospel, the fourth, and the first as it originally stood, do not assert at all. On what explanation can we fall back save that the knowledge of the Indian religious drama had been conveyed to Egypt or Syria, either by travelling Hindus or by Westerns who visited India; and that the compilers of the third Gospel got it in that way? How should such a hopeless story have been invented for such a purpose if the hint were not already in circulation?

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for the enrolment story, Mary brings forth Jesus "*in* Bethlehem, in a cave near the tomb of Rachel" (ch. vii).

[1] Vishnu Purâna, Wilson's trans., p. 503.

[2] *Id.* Note by Wilson.

[3] *Id.*, p. 506.

As for the old attempt of the self-frustrative Maurice[1] to derive the item of Devakî's imprisonment by Kansa within seven gates, from the Christian legend, preserved by the Mohammedans,[2] that Mary during her maidenhood was guarded by Zacharias in the sanctuary within seven doors, the answer here is still more easy. M. Senart[3] without any thought of Maurice's contention, of which probably he never heard, gives a Hindu antecedent for the story in an utterance of Indra in the Vedas: "Being still in the breast of my mother, I saw the birth of all the devas: a hundred fortresses of brass enveloped me; I escaped with violence in the form of a falcon" (Rig Veda, iv, 27, 1). And we may further point to the close parallel in the Cyrus legend,[4] in which Astyages puts his daughter under a guard, just as Kansa does his sister Devakî; and to the familiar myth of the imprisonment of Danaë in the brazen tower. Is it likely that the Hindu imagination would need to come to Christianity for the detail of the seven gates? Is it not much more likely that the Christian-Mohammedan legend was derived from the Hindu drama? But indeed this, like so many other details of the myth, may well have come westward with the Aryan race; it may have been pre-Aryan; and it may point mythically to the seven planets of ancient astronomy. Alcmena, who with her husband Amphitryon had come away from her own home,[5] like so many other mothers of Gods, bears Hercules to Jupiter and the twin Iphiclus to Amphitryon in seven-gated Thebes;[6] and a similar myth may have been taught in the Dionysiak, the Mithraic, the Osirian, or any other mysteries. Of myth there is no "original", save mankind's immemorial dream.

XII.

After what has been thus far seen of the correspondences between the Christian legends and prior myths, it is unnecessary to go at great length into the exposition

[1] "History of Hindostan", ii, 314.
[2] Sale's "Koran", note on chap. iii (ed. 1734, p. 39 *b*).
[3] *Essai sur la Légende du Buddha*, p. 314.
[4] Herodotus, i, 108.
[5] Hesiod, "Shield of Hercules", 1. [6] *Id.*, 49.

of such a plainly mythical detail as the birth in a stable, which corresponds with, and is thought by Christians to have suggested, the legend of the placing of Krishna in a basket, and even, apparently, his upbringing among the Gopîs. We have seen that an orthodox English Sanskritist identifies the basket with the Gospel manger; and Professor Weber lays stress[1] on the representation of the birth of Krishna in a cow-shed in the elaborate and dramatic ritual service of the Krishna Birth-Festival, which here departs from the Purânic legend, that making the birth take place in Kansa's fortress. On this head a sufficient answer is given out of hand by M. Senart:

"The confusion, in certain sources, of the *sûtikâ-griha* (lying-in room) with a *gokula*, a stable, contrary to the strict details of the recital, seems to him [Weber] one more sign of Christian imitation. But it must be remembered that the sûtikâ-griha must, in the terms of the ritual, contain not only Devakî with her son and Vasudeva, but also, and all together, the images of the shepherds, of the servants of Kansa, the guards of Devakî, of the Apsaras and the armed Dânavas, of Yasoda and Rohinî, without reckoning the representations of all the exploits attributed to the child Krishna [Weber, pp. 268, 280, ff.]. The intention then was not to give a faithful picture of the facts reported in the legend, but to group in a single frame all the personages included in it. How, on that footing, could separation be made of the new-born and the mother, or distinction between the prison and the dwelling of the shepherd? And of what weight is the novelty, illogical if it be, of the arrangement? The idea of representing the young God at the breast of his mother is really too simple to prove anything: there are not wanting examples of it in the religious representations of the Greeks."[2]

But not only is the suckling motive, as we previously saw, pre-Christian: the items of the basket-manger and the stable are equally so. Not only is the Greek *liknon*, or twig basket, used to this day for corn and for cradling children, but we know that the infant Bacchus, in the processions of his cult, was represented among the Greeks as being carried in such a basket, which again is represented as being the cradle of Hermes[3]

[1] Treatise cited, p. 269.

[2] *Essai*, p. 335. Compare our preceding Section X, § 1, and K. O. Müller's "Ancient Art and its Remains", Eng. tr., p. 493.

[3] ἱερῷ ἐνὶ λίκνῳ, "in the sacred basket". Hom. "Hymn to Hermes", 21.

and of Jupiter.[1] In the ancient Greek lexicon of Hesychius (which at this point the Christians certainly did not interpolate, though they did so at others) the word Λικνίτης is defined as ἐπίθετον Διονύσου· ἀπὸ τῶν λίκνων, ἐν οἷς τὰ παιδία κοιμῶνται, "an epithet of Dionysos, from the *liknons* in which children are cradled".[2] Now if, as our Christian apologist argues, a basket is a manger (as it doubtless is in the East), it clearly follows on his own reasoning that the Christian story is derived from the previous Dionysiak cultus. In actual fact we find the God-Child represented, on a sarcophagus in the Catacombs, as cradled in a basket, standing under a shed, with an ox and an ass looking on at his feet.[3] This bas-relief, which includes (apparently) the father and the mother, and three figures coming with gifts, is claimed as Christian by Christian scholars, who see in it the adoration of the Magi. It has been argued, on the other hand,[4] that the sculpture is really Mithraic; a view I am much inclined to share. But in any case, Christian or Mithraic, this bas-relief, which probably belongs to the fourth century, proves that a God-Child was early represented as lying swaddled in a basket, with an ox and an ass looking on, in circumstances which irresistibly suggest the Gospel legend of the birth of Jesus; and that legend is thus clearly imitative of, for one thing, the old Greek usage of carrying in a basket the infant Dionysos, one of whose favorite animals is the ass. The cradle of Dionysos is a "long basket"[5]—exactly the description of that in the scene in the Catacomb sculpture. And if it be argued that the

[1] λίκνῳ ἐνὶ χρυσέῳ, "in a golden basket". Callimaohus, "Hymn to Jupiter," 48.

[2] Compare Liddell and Scott, *s. v.* λικνίτης, λικνον, and λικνοφόρος.

[3] See the reproduction in Northcote and Brownlow's "Roma Sotteranea", ed. 1879, ii, 258.

[4] By an able Dutch rationalist, Dr. H. Hartogh Heijs van Zouteveen, in his "Over den Oorsprong der Godsdienstige Denkbeelden", p. 56, citing Nork's *Mythen der alten Persen*, which I have not been able to see. But the point is put in Nork's *Die Weihnachts und Osterfeier erklärt aus dem Sonnencultus der Orientalen*, 1838, p. 30.

[5] Smith's Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Ant., ed. 1849, p. 411.—Art. *Dionysia*. It is not clear to me that this is the *mystica vannus Iacchi*, as would seem to be implied by Liddell and Scott, and as is asserted by Müller ("Ancient Art," as cited, p. 494). The "mystic winnowing fan" was indeed a basket, but was it not the *Kaneon* of the Canephorae?

stable story is something special to Christianity, the answer is that it is one of the oldest motives in Aryan mythology. The frequency with which Greek and Indian deities are associated with cows is sufficient to indicate to any student unmesmerised by religion that a nature myth underlies every case.[1] That the cow is the foremost myth-animal in the Vedas, nobody disputes. The clouds, the firmament, the moon, the earth, all have that aspect in turn; and to the last the idea holds its ground. In the Vishnu Purâna the clouds, the "cattle of Indra", "deluge the earth with milk", and "the cows and the bulls bellow as loud as roaring clouds";[2] and the cow is to the Hindu to-day as sacred as ever, and preserves its cultus. But the myth of cow and stable spread world-wide with the race, so that we find the solar Hercules and Mercury fabled as living with shepherds or dealing with cows; and the thievish "night-awaiting" Mercury, who makes himself black with ashes,[3] and who on the evening of the day of his birth steals the (cloud-) cows of the Day-God Apollo,[4] (who himself was a cowherd[5]) was just such a figure as the black Krishna, playing among the cows with the cow-herds, untrammelled by commonplace moral principles. So have we seen the solarised Cyrus playing among the ox-stalls of his foster-father's home. In the quasi-Homeric "Hymn to Venus", again, the love-sick Goddess comes to Anchises "in the stalls", while the shepherds and the cows and sheep are absent; and he disrobes her; but when these return she breathes sleep into her lover and herself puts on beautiful garments. And as we come nearer Christianity the plot thickens. In the worship of Isis, the sacred Cow (herself a virgin, supernaturally impregnated by a flash of lightning or by the rays of the Moon[6])

[1] In Norse cosmogony a cow plays an important part in the creation of man (Grimm's "Teutonic Mythology", Stallybrass' trans., ii, 559. *Cf.* p. 665). [2] Wilson's trans., pp. 525, 529.

[3] Callimachus, "Hymn to Artemis".

[4] Homeric "Hymn to Hermes", 22, ff. It is noteworthy that in ancient sculpture, as in the Hymn, the child Mercury is represented as lying *in swaddling-clothes*, defending himself from the charge of cattle-stealing, and as "cattle-stealer *in the cradle*" (Müller, "Anc. Art," as cited, p. 487). Here we have the swaddled and cradled child-God, the Greek *Logos*, figured in connexion with cattle.

[5] Iliad, xxi, 446-8.

[6] Herodotus, iii, 28; Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris", c. 43.

was carried seven times round the temple *upon the eve of the winter solstice*,[1] when the sun-child rose from the lotus;[2] and cow-headed Isis bears the sun-God Horus, as in Indian legend the sun is born of the cows.[3] And still closer comes the parallel. We know from Macrobius[4] that the Egyptian priests exhibited a babe to the people on a certain day as being the new-born Sun-God; and from Plutarch we know that the infant Horus was figured on the lotos at the time of the winter solstice. But there is documentary evidence that in the Egyptian system, a Babe-Savior was in pre-Christian times worshipped *in a manger or crib*, in connexion with a virgin mother. The proof is furnished by the remarkable record in the Christian *Chronicon Paschale* (formerly but improperly called *Alexandrium*): "The same Jeremiah gave a sign to the Egyptian priests that their idols would be shaken and overthrown by a *child Savior*, born of a virgin, and laid in a manger (φατνη). Wherefore they still deify a child-carrying virgin, and adore a child in a manger. And to the enquiry of *King Ptolemy* as to the cause, they answered that they had received this mystery from a holy prophet who gave it to their fathers."[5] The *Chronicon Paschale* dates from the seventh century, and would not by itself suffice to prove the cultus alleged, seeing that a Christian might—though this in the circumstances would be extremely unlikely—invent such a story to support his own faith, that being evidently the purpose with which the chronicler cites it. But read in connexion with Macrobius and Plutarch, and the ritual of the birth of Amunoteph, it may be taken as certainly resting on a usage in ancient Egyptian religion. The Virgin and Child must of course have been Isis and Horus, whose worship was much older than Jeremiah. And the expression "Child Saviour" clearly points to a child-worshipping ceremonial, and not to the Christian idea of salvation by the crucified adult. It is needless to remark on the possibility that the ox-and-ass myth came from the same quarter, seeing that the temples of the sacred bull, Apis, and of the sacred cow, Isis, were already mystically, and

[1] Last cit., c. 52. [2] c. 11.
[3] "Zoological Mythology", i, 51.
[4] *Saturnalia*, i, 18.
[5] Migne, *Patrolog. Curs. Comp., Series. Gr.*, T. xcii, col. 385.

in the former case literally, stables. But for the ox and stable there is yet another precedent. In the worship of Mithra, on the testimony of a Christian writer,[1] the lowing of the sacred heifers was part of a festival ceremony, evidently that of Christmas eve. Now, it has been shown[2] that in a multitude of points the Christian myths are simply based on previous ritual, as Professor Smith says myths so often are: shall we then suppose that this primitive myth of the Christian God-born-in-a-stable, which only after a time passed current even with his own worshippers, and which early takes the form of representing him as being born between cow and ass, whose cries, in the popular fable, hide his,[3] as the cries of the infant Zeus were covered in order to prevent Kronos from hearing them[4]—that this is anything but a variation of the myth-motive of pagan antiquity?

That the ox and ass in the Mithraic-Christian birth-scene have a mythic significance is very certain. They are not merely inmates of the "stable"; they are from of old symbolic animals: and they were the two of all the talking beasts who had the widest prophetic reputation.[5] The bull or ox, again, is one of the symbol-animals of the Sun-God; while the ass is not only of phallic repute, but "carries mysteries",[6] is constantly associated with the Sun-God Dionysos, and is probably at bottom the night-sun,[7] as is Dionysos himself, in contrast to Apollo, the day-sun.[8] In the sacred processions of Isis, the ox and the ass were the principal, if not the only, animals, the latter being sometimes adorned with wings.[9] Now in the Krishna ritual,

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[1] Firmicus, *De Errore*, v. See the lecture on Mithraism above cited, p. 427.

[2] *Id.*, pp. 417—428.

[3] "Zoological Mythology", i, 361.

[4] Callimachus, "Hymn to Jupiter".

[5] For ox and cow, see Livy, iii, 10; xxiv, 10; xxvii, 11: xxviii, 11; xxxv, 21; xliii, 13. For the ass, see Plutarch's Life of Antony, where the ass's name, *Nikon*, "Victory", predicts to Augustus the triumph of Actium; and the Hebrew legend of Balaam—two widely circulated stories. Cp. Gubernatis, Zool. Myth., i, 247, 398. For the talking *horse*, see Grimm, as cited, i, 392.

[6] Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 160; and note in Bohn trans.

[7] Gubernatis, vol. i, ch. 3, *passim*.

[8] Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i, 18.

[9] Apuleius, "Golden Ass", B. xi.

the ox and the ass figure very much as they do in the birth scene of the Catacombs: and Professor Weber decides that this is one of the details borrowed from Christianity. On that view, it would be borrowed from the Apocryphal Gospel of Matthew, or "Pseudo"-Matthew as it is commonly styled. The narrative of that document, late in its present form, is doubtless in part based on much older originals, and challenges attention by its peculiarity:—

"And on the third day after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the most blessed Mary went forth out of the cave, and entering a stable, placed the child in the stall, and the ox and the ass adored him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Isaiah the prophet, saying: The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib. The very animals therefore, the ox and the ass, having him in their midst incessantly adored him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Abakuk the prophet, saying, Between two animals thou art made manifest. In the same place Joseph remained with Mary three days."

The reference to Habakkuk (iii, 2) is not to the Hebrew as commonly rendered, but to the Septuagint, in which by a slight variation in the vocalisation of one Hebrew word and the spelling of another, the words "years" and "make alive" (the marginal reading in the Authorised Version is "preserved alive", the text reading "revive") are made to read as "two living creatures",[1] so that we have the Greek version *ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζώων γνωσθήσῃ*, "between two living creatures thou shalt be known". Here then rises the interesting question, Does the Septuagint proceed upon an Egyptian or other version of the ox-and-ass myth? Let us see what the commentators have to say:—

"There is a double reading of these words in the Septuagint version of them, and both very different from the Hebrew text. The one is, *in the midst of two lives thou shalt be known*. . . . . The other, by a change of the accent, is, *in the midst of two animals thou shalt be known*; so the Arabic version. Theodoret makes mention of both, and inclines to the former; 'some (he says) by two animals understand angels and men; some the incorporeal powers near the divine Glory, the cherubim and seraphim: others the Jews and Babylonians; but to me it

[1] Note in the "Anti-Nicene Library" ed. of the Apocryphal Gospels, p. 23.

seems that the prophet does not say animals, but lives, the present and future. . . . .' The latter reading is followed by many of the ancients, whose different senses are given by Jerome on the place; some interpreting them of the Son and Spirit, by whom the Father is made known; others of the two cherubim in Exodus, and of the two seraphim in Isaiah; and there were some who understood them of the two Testaments, the Old and New . . . .; and others of Christ's being crucified between two thieves . . . .; but besides these different sentiments many of the ancients concluded from hence that Christ lay in the manger between two animals, the ox and the ass, and to which they refer in their ancient hymns. [*Cognovit bos et asinus Quod puer erat Dominus*]. . . . ."[1]

The rest is modern Talmudism—the ancient "demoniacal possession" of verbalism over again. Nothing is to be gathered save that the Septuagint somehow adopted the reading of "two creatures", no one clearly knowing why. In the circumstances it is idle to offer conjectures. All that is clear is that the context in the Septuagint: "thou shalt be acknowledged when the years draw nigh; thou shalt be manifestod when the time is come", was well fitted to serve as a Messianic prophecy for the Hellenic Jews. But that a merely accidental reading or misreading of the Hebrew text could be the *origin* of the myth of the stable and the adoring ox and ass, as later found in the apocryphal Gospel, is incredible. The stable, as we have seen, was an established myth, and for some reason or reasons, the ox and ass were put in the stable. If the translator of Habakkuk in the Septuagint was influenced by an Egyptian or Oriental mystery-doctrine, then we trace to pre-Christian times the entrance of the ox-and-ass myth into Judaic channels: if, on the other hand, the "two animals" was a quite fortuitous reading, we are left to what we otherwise know of the mythological standing of the animals in question.

And the passage in Pseudo-Matthew is singularly suggestive of just such a process of legend-making from old ritual as has been above contended for. Here, as in the Protevangelion, the laying-in-the-manger is entirely dissociated from the birth, and is therefore the more con-

[1] Gill's "Exposition of the Old Testament", Doudney's ed. iv, 777.

fidently to be looked upon as a piece of narrative framed to meet a purpose; just as the pragmatic account of the lightless cave is evidently intended to have a doctrinal significance. The *need* for such a doctrine lay in the pre-existence of cave-worship, especially in Mithraism, from which Christianity so largely borrowed in other regards: the need for the laying in a manger in presence of ox and ass can only be explained in a similar way. Thus established, the myth would easily reappear in the form of the animation by the child Jesus of figures of oxen and asses,[1] and in the appearance of oxen and asses in the fabulous cortege of the family in Egypt.[2]

Is it then reasonable, is it plausible, to assume that this certainly derivative legend, never accepted as canonical, suddenly captured the Hindus late in our era in its Christianised form? Are we not, on the contrary, driven irresistibly to ask, Is not the Christian ox-and-ass legend one of immemorial Aryan antiquity?

And here, at least, the Hindu sacred books and ritual offer something like a decisive answer. To begin with, Agni in the Rig Veda is constantly addressed as a new-born infant, he being primarily the Fire, which is generated afresh every time the *aranis*, the fire-sticks, are rubbed together, which would seem to have been done for religious purposes (somewhat as the sacred fire was rekindled in Mexico) for ages after that laborious process had become practically unnecessary. Thus, for one thing, the ever new-born Agni of the Veda is associated with the crossed sticks, which on one theory are the origin of the cross symbol. But not only is Agni repeatedly adored as the new-born by his worshippers, he is held to be similarly adored by the forces of nature, as is the luminous Christ-child in the Protevangelion (c. 13), and by the Devas or divinities in general:—

"Agni, the bright-bodied, as soon as born, fills all dwellings with shining light. When born, thou, O Agni, art the embryo of heaven and earth, ... variegated, infantine, thou dispersest the nocturnal glooms. . . . . Therefore the genetrices (of all things, the herbs) the cherishers (of all) with food, wait on thee who art the augmenter of food, with the sacrificial viands."[3]

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[1] 1 Infancy, xv. [2] Pseudo-Matthew c. 19.
[3] Wilson's trans. of Rig Veda Sanhita, vi (1888), pp. 1–2.

"The Vedic Gods render homage to Agni when he is born, and when he passes resplendent from his parents the *aranis*." [1]

"He [Agni] diffuses happiness in a dwelling like a son newly born." [2]

"He [Agni] it is whom the two sticks have engendered like a new-born babe." [3]

"Thou [Agni] art born unobstructed of two mothers [*i.e.* either the fire-sticks or the heaven and earth] . . . . they have augmented thee with butter." [4]

And this transparent infant-myth is curiously interwoven with the other primeval myths of cow and cave.

"Agni, as soon as born, blazes brightly, destroying the Dasyus" [demons] "and (dispersing) the darkness by his lustre: he has discovered the cows, the waters, the sun." [5]

"In this world our mortal forefathers departed after instituting the sacred rite, when, calling upon the dawn, they extricated the milk-yielding kine, concealed among the rocks in the darkness (of the cave).

"Rending the rocks they worshipped (Agni) and other (sages) taught everywhere their (acts): unprovided with the means of extricating the cattle, they glorified the author of success, whence they found the light, and were thus enabled (to worship him) with holy ceremonies.

"Devoted (to Agni) those leaders (of sacred rites) with minds intent upon (recovering) the cattle, forced open, by (the power) of divine prayer, the obstructing compact solid mountain, confining the cows, a cow-pen full of kine. . . . .

"The scattered darkness was destroyed: the firmament glowed with radiance; then the sun stood above the undecaying mountains, beholding all that was right or wrong among mankind." [6]

This last extra-obscure passage well exemplifies the frequent difficulty, avowed by the best scholars,[7] of making out what the Vedas mean—a difficulty further deducible from a comparison of the renderings of Wilson and Langlois with those of later German translators. But the association of Agni with cattle and cave seems certain from that and the previous extract, and there is no great obscurity in these further passages:—

"Both the auspicious ones (day and night) wait upon him

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[1] Senart, *Essai*, p. 292, citing Rig Veda, vi, 7, 4.
[2] Wilson's trans., i, 184. [3] *Id.* iii, 253–4.
[4] *Id.* iii, 256–7. [5] *Id.* iii, 261. [6] *Id.* iii, 115–6.
[7] See Muir, "Original Sanskrit Texts", ii, 214.

[Agni] like two female attendants, as lowing kine (follow their calves)." [1]

"The night and the day, mutually effacing each other's complexion, give nourishment, combined together, to one infant, [Agni] who, radiant, shines between earth and heaven." [2]

Of these two extracts, the first (or one closely similar—it is difficult to trace passages with certainty in the translations) is thus rendered in the metrical version of H. Grassmann[3]: "To thee, Agni, shout for joy *(jauchzen)* Night and the Dawn, as in the stalls cows cry to calves." Is it going too far to surmise that, seeing Agni himself, Fire-God and Sun-God, was in the Veda said to have been, "in the olden time, the bull and the cow",[4] the symbols of the Night and the Morning, here represented as saluting him, may even then have been the Ox and Ass?

It is idle to seek to force the solution of such a problem; and in so far as the Vedic evidence goes I leave the matter to the judgment of the reader, merely adding that when we compare the notion of the instantaneous growth of the new-born Agni (who "as soon as born fills heaven and earth with light", and "*fractures, as he advances, the solid cloud*";[5] and who is further the "archer" and the "lord of night"[6]), the Vedic address to Indra as having "discovered the cows hidden in the cave",[7] and the legend that these cows were stolen by the Asuras[8]—when we compare these data with the Greek myth of the infant night-awaiting cattle-stealing Mercury, it is difficult to doubt that the latter fable derives from the Aryan original preserved in the Veda. Whether the "two mothers" had anything to do with the common myth of the suckling of the child-God by another than she who bore him, we need not here inquire. But as regards the Indian origin of the ox-and-ass myth we get a fresh light when we connect the Vedic myths of the infant Agni (who, by the way, was specially invoked at the vernal equinox[9]) with the Krishnaite ritual of the Birth Festival. In the *Jayantî* form of the festival, *the erecting of a shed*, the watching by it through the night, and *the distribution of images*, are important

[1] Wilson's trans. i, 246. [2] *Ib.* p. 252. [3] Leipzig, 1876, p. 8.
[4] Wilson's trans. vi (1888), p. 11. [5] Wilson's trans., iii, 120.
[6] *Id.* i, 186, 188. [7] *Id*, i, 16.
[8] *Id. ib.* Wilson's note. [9] *Id.* i, 157, *note*.

items.[1] Now, in the Catacomb sarcophagus, the basket containing the child, and the ox and ass, stand *under a sloping shed-roof*, standing on two posts, while none of the other figures do. Here there is neither cave nor inn-stable: there is only a scenic shed, exactly answering to the shed of the Krishnaite ritual; and to the right of that two palm trees, between which the mother sits. Remarkably enough, one of those trees *bends*, as do the palms in the Koran legend of Mary, and in the Buddhist legend of Maya. The trees clearly cannot be reconciled with cave or stable. How then came this shed to appear in early Christian (as is supposed) sacred art, unauthorised either by the generally received cave legend, or by the story in the third Gospel? What possible conclusion is open to us save that it represents a usage in the dramatic ritual of some other cultus; and that it was this usage that was in view in the peculiar version of the story in the Apocryphal Gospels? And what ritual usage do we know of that comes so close as that of Krishnaism? Either the scene is Christian or it is Mithraic. If the latter, we have a phase of complete identity between the Persian and the Hindu cult, which need not surprise us; and in that case Mithraism would be the channel through which the ox-and-ass, stable-, and manger-myth came into Christianity. But if we suppose the bas-relief to be strictly Christian, then it must be held to be a close imitation of a ritual usage previously existing in India — the usage which survives in our own day. For the ass appears in Indian mythology as early as the Vedas, where already he has two characters, divine and demoniacal, being at one time the symbol of Indra, Krishna's predecessor, and at another his enemy.[2] As the friend of the black and once demoniac Krishna, he corresponds, with reversal of color, to the ass of Egypt, who was the symbol of the evil Typhon.[3] Again, curiously, one of his Vedic epithets is "childlike".[4]

And if borrowing there were on the Hindu side—which will hardly now be argued—it could perfectly well have been pre-Christian. The ass might be the ass of Typhon,

[1] Weber, p. 223.
[2] Zool. Myth. ii, 370-4.
[3] Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris", cc. 30, 31.
[4] Zool. Myth. ii, 364.

"who was the chief god of the Semites in Egypt"[1] though in ill-repute with the Egyptians; and it may have been from this source that the Christians derived it. It is also possible that they made a not uncommon confusion between the ass of Typhon and the *jackal*-headed Anubis, the Egyptian Hermes, "both infernal and celestial", who was held to represent *Time*,[2] and who figured as the attendant of Osiris. And when we are discussing origins, we should not forget the luminous suggestion of Volney,[3] that the birth of the Sun-Child between the ox and the ass is simply a fable based on the fact that in the zodiacal celestial sphere the sun would come at the winter solstice between the Bull and the Ursa Major, sometimes represented by the ancients as a boar, sometimes as the Hippopotamus, sometimes the Ass, of Typhon.

Another detail comes in to extend the proof that the Christian legend borrows from the East. In the Catacomb fresco representing the (supposed) adoration of the Virgin and child by *two* Magi, as reproduced in large and in color in De Rossi's *Imagines Selectae Deiparae Virginis*[4] the dish tendered to the babe or mother by the right-hand man bears a *small human figure*. What is the Christian explanation of that? What hypothesis is more likely than that this is one of the Krishnaite images?

That, of course, remains a hypothesis. And, indeed, we are bound to keep in view that the manifold Egyptian ritual *may* have included just such a ceremony as that under notice. In the procession of Isis, as described by Apuleius, the ass is accompanied by a feeble old man—exactly the aged Joseph of the Apocryphal Gospels. And we know that the solarised Amunoteph III, who here seems to typify customary royal ceremony, figures in Egyptian sculpture as supernaturally announced, conceived, and born, very much as is Jesus in Christian legend.[5] The messenger-God, Thoth, announces to the

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[1] Prof. Robertson Smith, "Religion of the Semites", p. 449. Cp. Tiele, "Hist. of the Egypt. Relig.," Eng. tr., p. 48.

[2] "Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris," c. 44; Sharpe, "Egyptian Mythology", pp. 8-9.

[3] *Les Ruines*, note on ch. xxii, § 13

[4] Rome, 1863, pl. v. Cp. "Roma Sotteranea", as cited, ii, 170.

[5] See the woodcut and explanation in Sharpe's "Egyptian Mythology" pp. 18-19.

maid-mother the coming birth; the Spirit-God Kneph miraculously impregnates her; and the priests kneel and adore the new-born babe, holding up the cross of life. This must have been a matter of ritual. In the Catacomb bas-relief and frescoes, again, the adorers, the "Magi", both in the picture with two and in that with four,[1] wear the Phrygian or Mithraic cap; but instead of representing the venerable sages of modern Christian fancy, they are all young and beardless. The juvenile angel, again, exactly corresponds to that which figures in the admittedly Mithraic remains in the Catacombs, as reproduced by Father Garucci and accepted by Canons Northcote and Brownlow. On the other hand, in the fragment of the earliest dated Catacomb sarcophagus[2] held to be Christian, representing the ox and ass, the swaddled child, and two adorers, the men are rather of Western figure; though at the end behind them a hand appears grasping a palm tree or branch. Thus there is the suggestion of the East as well as of Western assimilation. We cannot yet decide with certainty as to the myth's line of travel; we can only decide that all Christian myth *is* an adaptation of previous myth.

The case, I think, is clear for all but pietists. The Krishna birth myth is at bottom primeval; and it is highly probable that the Birth-Festival ritual, which Professor Weber supposes to have been based on Christianity, preserves prehistoric practice. At the midnight hour of the God's birth, there is a ceremony of a "pouring out of riches"[3] (*ein Guss Reichthums*), which it is a wonder the Professor does not hold to represent the offerings of the Magi. In all probability it *does* point to the *origin* of that myth. The "riches" are symbolic, an offering of melted butter and sugar—surely the "nectar and pleasant ambrosia" with which Themis fed the babe Apollo;[4] the milk and honey on which Bacchus and the child Jupiter[5] were nourished; the "butter and honey" that in the

[1] "Roma Sotteranea," as cited, ii, 169: *Imag. Sel.* pl. iii.

[2] It bears the names of the consuls of 343, A. C. See the cut in "Roma Sotteranea", ii, 235.

[3] Treatise cited, p. 299.

[4] Hom. Hymn. 124.

[5] Callimachus, "Hymn to Jupiter," 49; and note in Bohn trans., p. 123.

Hebrew prophet[1] are named as the food of the child Immanuel to be born of the "virgin" of that time, and that were used in their rites (with milk for butter) by the early Christians, especially in the "mystery of infants", till the Council of Trullo (*i.e.*, Constantinople, in 691) forbad the usage,[2] doubtless because its pagan origin was recognised. And surely the ancient adoration of the ever-new-born Agni was the origin of the offering of butter to the new-born Krishna. Does not the whole mass of data go to suggest that a more or less dramatic ritual has preserved a Babe-Sun-God worship from immemorial antiquity? In pre-Christian India it became actual drama, which the Festival ritual, with its multitude of images, appears to preserve as far as may be; and I am much inclined to suspect that the form of part of the Protevangelion (xiii, xiv) comes of a semi-dramatic ritual, as the adoration of the Magi must have done, and as the legends of the Lord's Supper and the rock-tomb burial certainly did.[3] Be that how it may, the theory that Krishnaism borrowed either its myths or its rites from Christianity is now evidently enough untenable.

XIII.

The study of a few of the minor myths of Christianity in connexion with Krishnaism will be found no less instructive, no less decisive as against Christian assumptions, than the comparison of the central myth-motives of the two creeds. Always the lesson is that the mythology of Christianity was derivative; and at times, though it would be inadmissible to profess certainty, there is a curiously strong suggestion of direct Christian adoption of Hindu details. I have spoken of the item of the visit of the foster-father of Krishna to the holy city to pay his taxes, which in the Krishna myth is as it were naturally embedded in the narrative, while in the Christ myth it is grafted on loosely and precariously. But the same statement may be made

[1] Isaiah, vii, 14—15.

[2] Bingham's "Christian Antiquities", xv, 2, § 3 (ed. 1855, vol. v, 242-3).

[3] Lecture on "Mithraism", as cited.

even more emphatically in other regards. Professor Weber[1] has assumed the priority of the "Christophoros" legend, in which St. Christopher under miraculous circumstances carries the rejuvenated Christ, the Christ-child, on his shoulders across a river by night. The Professor does not ask how it was that the idea of regarding Christ *still as a child* came to persist in the Church through so many centuries, and that only gradually did he come to be pictured as a young man, and finally as a man of middle age. We can see what preserves the child image in Krishnaism—the ancient usage of dramatic ritual, which is only partially overruled by the literary presentment of the stories of his career. Now, by far the most probable hypothesis of the origin of the Christophoros myth is that, like so many others, it was invented late to explain some dramatic or other representation—that there was a ritual in which the Christ-child, like the infant Bacchus in Greece and the infant Horus in Egypt, was carried on a man's shoulder, long before the legend of the colossal Christ-bearer was framed.

For this hypothesis we have the most convincing evidence in the plural term *Christophoroi*, found applied to martyrs in an alleged letter of the third century quoted by Eusebius.[2] This term every orthodox authority I have seen deduces from the epithet "Theophoros", said to have been applied to Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch; and the usual explanation is that it means "full of Christ" as Theophoros meant "full of God".[3] The Bohn translator, Mr. Crusé, however, insists on the etymological meaning of the word, writing that "the martyrs were called, by a strong figure, Christophori, because they *bore*; and Ignatius was called Theophorus for the same reason". This, I suspect, is nearer the truth than Mr. Crusé was aware of.

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[1] Here adopting a thesis of the pre-scientific Georgi—cited by Von Bohlen, *Das Alte Indien*, 1830, i, 232. Von Bohlen states that Kleuker held the Christophorus story to be of Indian origin; but I cannot find such a remark in the place cited. Kleuker did, however (*Abhandlungen*, as before cited, ii, 234), argue that it was probably the Christians who borrowed from the Hindus, and that the apocryphal Gospels show distinct traces of Indian influence.

[2] "Eccles. Hist.," iii, 10.

[3] So, in effect, Bingham, i, 6; Riddle, "Christ. Ant.," p. 134; Migne, *ad loc.*; Smith and Cheetham's "Dict. of Christ. Antiq.," *sub voce*; etc.

The name Theophoros would never been attached to Ignatius had it not been in existence before. It literally meant, in classic usage, one "bearing or carrying a God";[1] and would naturally be applied to those who carried statues of the Gods in ceremonial or procession.[2] There were a score of such names in connexion with the Greek rituals. Not to speak of the soldiers and police officers called after the weapons they carried, as the *dory-phoroi*, *aichmophoroi*, *mastigophoroi*, *rhabdophoroi*, etc., there were the *liknophoroi*, the women who carried the cradle-basket of Dionysos in his processions; the *kanephoroi*, women who bore sacred baskets of another sort; the *oschophoroi*, noble youths who, in the disguise of women, carried branches of vine in the festival from which came the name; the *deipnophoroi*, women who, as mothers, carried food for the youths; the *arrephoroi* (or *ersephoroi*), maidens who carried the figured peplus in the festival of Panathenaea; the *lampadophoroi*, who carried torches in the torch-races; and so on. Always the meaning is the literal *carrying* of something. Hermes with the ram on his shoulders (the admitted origin of the Christian image of the Good Shepherd[3]) is Hermes *Kriophoros*, the ram-bearer. Only secondarily and indirectly could the word come to have the meaning of "possessed by the God"; and the instance cited by Liddell and Scott,[4] in which the phrase is "pains of *inspiration*", is clearly in close connexion with the primary meaning. In all probability the name Theophoros at times became a family one, just as that of Nikephoros, "Victory-bearer,"[5] which continued to subsist long after Pagan times among Christians. The generic name *Christophoroi* must have had some solider basis than an analogy from a metaphor.

That the Christian myth of the Christ-birth is a concoction from previous myths, we have already seen; and that the borrowing was first made by way of "mystery" or ritual, the Catacomb remains go far to prove. We know too that in the Egyptian system, apart from the practice

[1] Liddell and Scott, *s. v.*, citing Æsch., Fr. 224.

[2] In such cases as those mentioned by Pausanias, ii, 7, 11; vii, 20, 21, etc., or in civic or royal processions.

[3] See Smith and Cheetham's Dict. under "Good Shepherd".

[4] From Æschylus, *Agam.* 1150.

[5] For this see Athenæus, v, 27.

of carrying the new-born Sun- Child to exhibit him to the people,[1] there was a whole order of *Pastophoroi*, bearers of the *pastos*, who according to one theory bore a shawl in the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, but "according to another interpretation"—and a much more tenable one—"were so denominated from carrying, not a shawl, but a shrine or small chapel, *containing the image of the God*".[2] These *Pastophoroi* were "a numerous and important body of men", who had allotted to them a part of the Egyptian temples, called the *pastophorion*,—a term adopted by the Jews in describing the temple of Jerusalem.[3] And they spread beyond Egypt, having a "college" or brotherhood at Industria, a city of Liguria.[4] Now, it may be argued that the term Christophoroi might be jocularly applied to Christians by analogy from these and other classes with the same name-suffix; but that the Christians should have adopted it without some real reason is hardly supposable. And when we look into the admitted remains of early Christian ritual, we see at least hints of what the reason was. In early frescoes, the Christian hierophant bears a *pastos*, or a *kistê*, analogous to the sacred chest of Dionysos. They would hardly carry the serpent, as the *kistê* did; but their shrine or chest carried something. It might be, then, that this was only the sacred *host*, which to this day is "the good God" in Catholic countries. But whence then came the idea of making the mythic Christophoros, giant as he was, carry the *child* Christ? I can see no explanation save one or both of two: (1) that the persistent Pagan charge against the early Christians of eating a child in their rites[5] rested

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[1] Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i, 18. It is important to remember that Macrobius says the child is carried *ex adyto*, out of the innermost sanctuary of the temple. The adytum "was almost certainly in its origin a cave; indeed in Greece it was often wholly or partially subterranean, and is called *μέγαρον*, which is the Semitic מערה and means a cave" (Smith, "Relig. of the Semites," p. 183). Here once more the Christian myth is led up to.

[2] Smith's Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Antiq., art. *Pastophorus*. Ed. 1849, p. 871. Compare Apuleius ("Golden Ass," B. 11), who speaks of the Pastophori as carrying "the sacred images" and "breathing effigies" (Bohn trans., pp. 234-5).

[3] 1 Maccabees, iv, 38.

[4] Smith's Dict. as above, citing Maffei, *Mus. Veron.*, p. 230. Apuleius locates a college of them at Cenchreæ.

[5] Justin Martyr, Apol. i, 35; ii, 14; Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. v, 1;

on a ritual custom of exhibiting or eating the baked *image* of a child,[1] a rite to which, as being a sacred mystery, the Christians were unwilling to confess;[2] or (2) that in the Christmas celebration a real or dummy child was actually carried in the sacred basket, just as Dionysos was in his, or as Horus was represented in Egypt, and as a child *may* have been in the rites of Mithra. And both theories are so probable that I, for one, will reject neither. The more closely we look into Christian myth, taken in connexion with the distinct records of pre-Christian ritual, the more clear does it become that the accepted notions of the rise of the cult are hopelessly wide of the facts.

Given, then, the pre-Christian existence of a child-

Athenag., Apol. c. 3; Origen, "Against Celsus", vi, 27; Min. Felix, cc. 9, 10, 30, 31; Tertullian, Apolog. cc. 7, 8, 9. On this obscure problem it has to be remembered that others than the Christians are accused of killing children in religious rites. Thus Juvenal (vi, 548-552) alleges that the Armenian and Syrian haruspices at Rome would sometimes augur from the entrails of a boy; and "according to Mohammedan accounts the Harranians in the Middle Ages annually sacrificed an infant, and boiling down its flesh, baked it into cakes, of which only freeborn men were allowed to partake" (Robertson Smith, "Religion of the Semites", p. 348, citing the *Fihrist*, and Chwolsohn). Here, too, of course, there is room for doubt. But the important fact remains that the Christians retained for their sacramental food the old name of *hostia*, "the victim"; and the Gospels all dwell on the eating and drinking of the God's body and blood with a literalness that is unintelligible on the hypothesis of mere allegory. See Matt. xxvi, 26–28; Mark xiv, 22–24; Luke xxii, 19–20; John vi, 48–58. A baked image seems the probable solution. Compare Minucius Felix, c. ix, as to the *infans farre contectus*. And that this rite, like the others, was borrowed from previous cults, is proved by a remarkable passage in Pliny as to the praise due to the Roman people for "having put an end to those monstrous rites" in which "to murder a man was to do an act of the greatest devoutness, and to eat his flesh was to secure the highest blessings of health" ("Nat. Hist.," xxx, 4). It is not clear that this refers to the Druids, mentioned in the context. Compare the point as to Mithraism in Lecture cited, pp. 421-2.

[1] Note the image on the platter of the "Magus", referred to in Sec. 12. Baked images were known in the sacrifices of the poor in antiquity (Herodotus, ii, 47); and in Mexico dough images of the God were eaten sacramentally. See H. H. Bancroft, "Native Races of the Pacific States," iii, 297–300, 389. Cp. ii, 321.

[2] See Tertullian, Apology, c. 7, where the denial is anything but straightforward. We may rest content with an orthodox explanation: "The method of celebrating baptism, confirmation,

carrying rite, in connexion with the Christmas festival as observed in the Egyptian and Mithraic cults, or as practised in the Dionysia; and given the adoption of this rite by Christism, the idea of making the mythic Giant Christophoros carry the Christ-child *across a river* might perhaps be grafted fortuitously on the old ritual-motive. It being necessary to have a story of the child being carried somewhere, a river was a possible enough invention. But when we are asked to believe that this legend, in which Pagan ritual was eked out with Christian fiction, so impressed the Hindus at an early period in our era that they transferred it bodily to the worship of their God Krishna, it is difficult to take the suggestion seriously. On the contrary, we are at once moved to answer that, if there was borrowing on either side, it must have been the Christians who borrowed from the religious drama or dramatic ritual of the Hindus. Once more, the carrying of the child Krishna across the mythological river by Vasudeva is naturally imbedded in the Krishna legend; while in Christian mythology it is patently alien, arbitrary, and unmotived, save in so far as it rests on the ancient epithet *Christophoros*, and the inferable usage of carrying a child or an image representing the new-born God in early Christian ritual. And, finally—what I cannot but think a noteworthy coincidence—the festival day of St. Christopher is placed in the Roman Catholic Calendar on the *25th day of July*, precisely at the time of year when in the Hindu ritual, and almost certainly in the early Hindu drama, Vasudeva would be represented as carrying Krishna across the river. Clearly the Indian *date* cannot be borrowed from the Christian: it depends on the Birth

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and the eucharist; the nature and effect of these ordinances; the sublime doctrine of the Trinity; and the Creed and Lord's Prayer, were only communicated to converts about the time of their baptism. *Christians were absolutely prohibited from revealing this information to catechumens or infidels*; and whenever the early Christian writers speak on such topics (except when controversy compels them to a different course) there is usually some reserve in their manner, some reference to the peculiar knowledge of the faithful. . . . This primitive discipline is sufficient to account for the facts, that very few allusions to the liturgy or eucharistic service are found in the writings of the Fathers; and that on the more solemn part of consecration, etc., they are almost entirely silent" (Rev. W. Palmer, "Origines Liturgicæ," 4th ed. i, 14; cp. p. 33).

Festival, which is as wide as possible of the Christian Nativity. It will need some very satisfactory explanation of St. Christopher's date on other lines to destroy the surmise that it was determined by the Hindu practice.

XIV.

In an argument which so often insists on the priority of dramatic ritual to written legend, it may be well to take passing note of the state of opinion as to the origin and history of Indian drama. On that as on so many other points, Professor Weber is found surmising Greek influence, and so putting the great period of the Hindu theatre comparatively late. It is needless here to go into that question at all fully. The points for us are that in any case Hindu drama was highly developed at a period before the suggested importation of Christian legends; and that since in all early civilisations religion and drama were closely related, because originally one, there must have been an abundance of sacred drama in India before the Christian era, as there has been since. We have seen the concrete proof of this in the admitted existence of an early religious drama in which figured the demoniac Kansa as enemy of Krishna. And even if Greek influences did affect Hindu dramatic practice after the invasion of Alexander, even to the extent of bringing Western mystery-ritual into the Indian (a sufficiently unlikely thing) the fact would remain that India had these ritual elements from pre-Christian sources. But inasmuch as Professor Weber's argumentation on Indian matters is in a manner interconnected, and his theory of dramatic imitation tends to prop up his theory of religious imitation, it may be pointed out that his opinion on the dramatic question is entirely at variance with that of other distinguished Indianists. Wilson, whom Weber more than once cites in self-support on other questions, is here very emphatically opposed to him. "It is not improbable", says Weber, "that even the rise of the Hindu drama was influenced by the performance of the drama at the courts of Greek kings."[1] Says Wilson, on the other hand:

"Whatever may be the merits or defects of the Hindu

[1] Berlin lecture cited, p. 25 = *Indische Skizzen*, p. 28.

drama, it may be safely asserted that they . . . . are unmixedly its own. The science of the Hindus may be indebted to modern discoveries in other regions, and their mythology may have derived legends from Paganism or Christianity; but it is impossible that they should have borrowed their dramatic compositions from the people either of ancient or modern times. . . . . The Hindus, if they learned the art from others, can have been obliged alone to the Greeks or to the Chinese. A perusal of the Hindu plays will show how little likely it is that they are indebted to either, as, with the exception of a few features in common which could not fail to occur, they present characteristic varieties of conduct and construction, which strongly evidence both original design and national development."[1]

I do not think anyone who reads Wilson's translations and compares them with the classic drama and, say, "Laou-Seng-Urh" in the English translation,[2] will have a moment's hesitation in acceding to Wilson's opinion. Nor is Lassen less emphatic. "In the oldest Buddhist writings", he points out, "a visit of play-actors is spoken of as something customary";[3] and he insists again[4] "that the dramatic art in India is a growth wholly native to the soil, without foreign influence in general or Greek in particular". The origination of Indian drama, he adds, in the former passage, "must certainly be put before the time of the second Asoka; how much earlier it is naturally impossible to say". Anyone who reads Wilson's translation of the "Mrichchakati", "The Toy Cart", dated by him between a century B.C. and the second century A.C., will, I think, be convinced that the "origination" must be carried a very long way back. That drama really represents in some respects a further evolution—I do not say a higher pitch of achievement—than the drama of Greece; and could only have been possible after a very long process of artistic development. It has certainly not a trace of the Greek spirit:[5] it is much more akin to the romantic drama of modern Europe.

[1] "Theatre of the Hindus", pref., pp. xi, xii.

[2] London, 1817. Cp. the "Brief View of the Chinese Drama" prefixed.

[3] *Indische Alterthumskunde*, ii, 502. See Körösi's analysis of the Tibetan "Dulva", in "Asiatic Researches", xx, 50, the testimony cited by Lassen.

[4] *Ind. Alt.*, ii, 1157.

[5] The remark of Donaldson ("Theatre of the Greeks", 7th ed.,

For the rest, there is, I suppose, no connexion with the theatre in the meaning of the name Devakî, which, it appears, has only loosely and indirectly the significance of "the Divine Lady", and strictly means "the player" or "she-player". Weber translates it *Spielerinn*, and Senart *joueuse*, with no allusion to any theatrical significance.[1] Nor can I find any explanation of the phrases: "I, who am a person of celestial nature, a mortal *Vasudeva*," and "I, a man of rank, a *Vasudeva*," occurring in "The Toy-Cart",[2] save Wilson's note on the former passage that Vasudeva=Krishna. These passages do not seem to have been considered in the discussions on Krishnaism. They serve, however, to repeat, if that be necessary, the refutation of the absurd Christian thesis that the name Vasudeva was based on that of Joseph; and Wilson's note indicates sufficiently his conviction of the antiquity of Krishnaism. In act v of the same play (p. 90) the epithet *Kesava* ("long-locked", *crinitus*), constantly associated with Krishna, is without hesitation taken by him to apply to the same deity.

The question as to the practice of dramatic ritual among the early Christians, of course, needs a fuller investigation than can be thus given to it in a mere comparison of Christism and Krishnaism; and I hope to return to the subject in another connexion. Suffice it here to say that already orthodox scholarship is proceeding to trace passages in the apostolic Epistles to surmised ancient liturgies;[3] and that such a passage as opens the third Sermon of St. Proclus (Bishop of Constantinople, 432-446), comparing the pagan and Christian festivals with only a moral

p. 7, *note*) that "the Indian stage, even if aboriginal, may have derived its most characteristic features from the Greek", is professedly based on the proposition that "there is every reason to believe" that Krishna "*was an imported deity*"—an extravagance significant only of the effect of theological bias in perverting English scholarship. K. O. Müller ("Hist. of the Lit. of Anc. Greece," ch. xxi, § 2) asserts incidentally that "The dramatic poetry of the Indians belongs to a time when there had been much intercourse between Greece and India", but offers no arguments, and presumably follows some earlier Indianist.

[1] Weber, pp. 316, 318; Senart, p. 323. Senart points out, however, that in the Mahâbhârata the father of Devakî is a Gandharva—*i.e.*, a "singer of heaven".

[2] "Theatre of the Hindus", i, 28, 145. *Cf.* p. 26, *n.*

[3] See the recent articles of Dr. Jessop in the *Expositor*.

differentiation; the repeated exhortations in his fourth Sermon to "come and see"; his long account (Sermon vi) of the dialogue between Joseph and Mary; and in general all his allusions to festivals and mysteries, point in the direction of a close Christian imitation of pagan dramatic practices in these matters. It is a matter not of conjecture, but of history, that the old play on the "Suffering Christ" is attributed to Gregory of Nazianzen: and Klein, the German historian of the drama, decides that the sacrament of the Mass or the Communion is "in itself already a religious drama, and is the original Mystery-play";[1] a view accepted and echoed by the orthodox Ulrici.[2] Klein has further traced, perhaps fancifully at some points, an interesting series of analogies between the early Christian liturgy and the Greek tragedy, which was essentially a religious service. M. Jubinal, again, explicitly states, in a sketch of the rise of the Mystery-plays, that "the fifth century presents itself with its cortège of religious festivals, during which are simulated (*on mime*) or figured in the church the adoration of the Magi, the marriage of Cana, the death of the Savior, etc."[3] This statement, made without citations, is repeated by Klein,[4] who merely cites as his authority the words of M. Jubinal; and by Dr. Ulrici,[5] who, carrying the statement further, merely cites these two writers; but I am unable at the moment to point to the precise ancient testimony on which it rests. It is, however, more than supported by orthodox clerical statement. Dr. Murdock, discussing the Christian adoption of the Christmas festival, observes that

"From the *first institution* of this festival, the Western nations seem to have transferred to it many of the follies and censurable practices which prevailed in the pagan festivals of the same season, such as adorning the churches fantastically, *mingling puppet shows and dramas with worship*, universal feasting and merry-making, visits and salutations, revelry and drunkenness."[6]

It is, indeed, one of the commonplaces of Protestant church historians to point out that after the State establishment

[1] *Geschichte des Dramas*, iv (=*Gesch. des Ital. Dram.* i), p. 2.
[2] "Shakspere's Dramatic Art", Bohn trans. i, 2.
[3] *Mystères Inédits du XVième Siècle*, 1837, pref., p. viii:
[4] iv, 11. [5] i, 4.
[6] Note on trans. of Mosheim, Cent. iv, Pt. ii, ch. 4, § 5.

of Christianity it borrowed many observances from Paganism.[1] What the student has to keep in view is that these usages, especially such a one as that of "puppet shows and dramas", cannot have been suddenly grafted on a religious system wholly devoid of them. The Christians certainly had the practice of celebrating *some* birthday of Christ long before the fourth century; and we have seen some of the reasons for concluding that on that occasion they had a mystery-ritual. It is noteworthy, too, that the subjects first specified as appearing in Christian shows or plays were precisely those which we know to have figured in the cults of Mithra and Dionysos, and in the Egyptian system. Further; it was exactly such subjects that were represented in the earliest mediæval Mysteries of which copies remain; and it was especially at Christmas and Easter that these were performed. It is hardly possible to doubt that these representations derive from the very earliest practices of the Christian sect, established when Paganism was still in full play. The dramatic character of the early Mysteries, which, as we have seen, were almost as inviolably secret as those of the Pagans, pierces through the cautious writings of the Fathers, as read even by clerical eyes:—

"Chrysostom most probably refers to the commemoration of our Savior's deeds and words at the last supper, as used in the liturgy, when he attributes such great importance to the words of institution of our Lord, which he considers as still chiefly efficacious in the consecration of the eucharist. He often speaks of the eucharist under the title of an unbloody sacrifice. . . . ."[2]

Other admissions are no less significant:—

"There can be little, if any, doubt that Christian liturgies were not at first committed to writing, but preserved by memory and practice." "When we examine the remains of the Roman, Italian, Gallican, and Spanish liturgies, we find that they all permitted a variety of expression for every particular feast. . . . . It appears to me that the practice of the western

[1] See, for instance, Mosheim, "Eccles. Hist.", Cent. iii, Pt. ii, ch. 4, § 3; Cent. iv, Pt. ii, ch. 4, § 1, 2; Cent. v, Pt. i, ch. 3, § 2, etc.; Gieseler, "Compend. of Ec. Hist.", Eng. tr., 1846, ii, 24—26, 32, 51, 61, etc.; Waddington, "Hist. of the Church", pp. 37, 212-4.

[2] Palmer, "Origines Liturgicæ", i, 33.

churches during the fifth and fourth centuries, in permitting the use of various 'missæ' in the same church, affords room for thinking that something of the same kind had existed from a remote period. For it does not seem that the composition of new 'missæ' for the festivals excited any surprise in these ages, or was viewed as anything novel in *principle*." [1]

That is to say, the first Christians, in their feeble and illiterate way, just tried to do what the Greeks had long done in their dramatic mysteries, which must have conformed in some degree to the creative tendency exemplified on such a splendid scale in their public drama, itself a development of religious ritual.[2]

"The Eleusinian mysteries were, as an ancient writer [Clem. Alex., Protrept., p. 12, Potter] expresses it, 'a mystical drama,' in which the history of Demeter and Cora was acted, like a play, by priests and priestesses, though probably only with mimic action, illustrated by a few significant sentences, and by the singing of hymns. There were also similar mimic representations in the worship of Bacchus: thus, at the Anthesteria at Athens, the wife of the second archon, who bore the title of Queen, was betrothed to Dionysus in a secret solemnity, and in public processions even the God himself was represented by a man. [A beautiful slave of Nicias represented Dionysus on an occasion of this kind: Plutarch, Nic. 3. Compare the description of the great Bacchic procession under Ptolemy Philadelphus in Athen. v.] At the Bœotian festival of the Agrionia, Dionysus was supposed to have disappeared, and to be sought for among the mountains; there was also a maiden (representing one of the nymphs in the train of Dionysus), who was pursued by a priest, carrying a hatchet, and personating a being hostile to the God. This festival rite, which is frequently mentioned by Plutarch, is the origin of the fable, which occurs in Homer, of the pursuit of Dionysus and his nurses by the furious Lycurgus."[3]

The last proposition, coming from one of the founders of Comparative Mythology, is specially noteworthy as implying the principle which has been followed in the present

[1] *Id.*, pp. 9, 10. Cp. Mosheim, Cent. iv, Pt. ii, ch. 4, § 3.

[2] K. O. Müller, "Hist. of the Lit. of Anc. Greece", ch. xxi, § 2–5; xxvii, § 1. It is true that, as remarked by Fustel de Coulanges in his admirable work *La Cité Antique* (*8ième ed.* p. 196), the words and rhythms of the hymns in the ancient domestic and civic rites were preserved unaltered; but this would not apply to the later syncretic mysteries.

[3] *Id.* xxi, § 3 (Lewis' trans., 1847, pp. 287–8).

essay—that ritual usages are the fountains of myth, and typically the most ancient things in religion. But while the central ritual was immemorial, it may be taken for granted that the secret drama and hymns were innovated upon frequently, if not annually. And this frequent or customary change, proceeding from spontaneous devotional or artistic feeling, would seem to have been attempted in some degree, and even in an artistic spirit,[1] by the first Christians, till the religious principle and the clerical instinct petrified everything into dead ritual. And only when we know much better than we do at present the details of the process by which they built up alike their liturgy and their legends, their mysteries and their festivals, from the swelter of religious systems around them, can we possibly be entitled to say that they did not take something from the ancient drama and ritual of India, to which so many Western eyes were then turned.

Finally, we must remember that in all probability the ancient race of travelling Pagan mummers survived obscurely all through the Dark Ages, as did so much genuine Paganism.[2] It seems to have been their encroachment on the hitherto purely clerical domain of religious play-acting that brought upon things theatrical the curse of the Church, who naturally wanted to destroy the art when she found it slipping from her hands. In any case, we know that, though the early Fathers had often denounced secular drama and actors, doing indiscriminately what Plato had done with discrimination, not till about the thirteenth century did the dramatic art and its devotees begin to come absolutely under the ecclesiastical ban. By that time the Church no longer knew—collectively, indeed, her children had never realised—that primitive drama was the very womb and genesis of the whole faith.

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[1] Mosheim (Cent. i, Pt. ii, ch. 4, § 6) decides that even in the first century the liturgical hymns "were sung not by the whole assembly, but by certain persons during the celebration of the sacred supper and the feasts of charity".

[2] Cp. Mr. Symonds' "Shakspere's Predecessors", p. 95; Vernon Lee, "Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy", pp. 233–4; Ulrici, as cited, p. 10; *Academy*, April 6, 1889, p. 231.

XV.

An examination of two other minor myth-motives of Christianity in connexion with Krishnaism will perhaps be found not uninteresting, by way of winding-up the detailed rebuttal of the Christian claim as against Krishnaite legend and practice. We have seen that the Catholic Church placed St. Christopher's day at the time when, in the Hindu legend, Vasudeva carries the new-born Krishna across a river. That is not the only detail of the kind. Just a fortnight before, on July 10th, is fixed the Catholic commemoration day of the *Septem Fratres Martyres*, the seven martyred brothers.

§ 1. Here we are at once up to the eyes in universal mythology. On the very face of the Christian martyrology, these Seven Brother Martyrs are mythic: they are duplicated again and again in that martyrology itself. Thus we have the specially so-called *Septem Fratres Martyres*, who are sons of a martyr mother Felicitas, and whose martyrdom is placed in the reign of Antoninus Pius—a safe way off. But on the 18th day of the same month we have the martyred Saint Symphorosa and *her* seven martyred sons, whose date is put under Hadrian, a little earlier still. But yet earlier still we find included in the same martyrology the pre-Christian case of the seven Maccabee brothers[1] and *their* mother, fixed for August 1. And still the list mounts. On July 27—we are always in or just out of July—is the holy day of the *Septem Dormientes*, our old friends the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, fabled to have been "walled up in a cave in which they had hid themselves" in the year 250, in the persecution of Decius, and to have waked up—or to have been discovered, as the scrupulous Butler would prefer to put it—in 479.[2] Nor is even this all. There are further the Seven Martyrs of Samosata, whose holy day is somewhat belated, December 9th; and the Seven *Virgin* Martyrs of Ancyra, who are placed under Diocletian, so as to help to cover the martyrological ground, and who in the Roman Catholic Calendar are commemorated on May 18, but in the Armenian Church

[1] 2 Maccabees, vii.
[2] See their story in Gibbon, c. 33, end.

on June 20. Doubtless the Seven Virgins, all ladies of about 70 years, have a different mythic origin from the seven brothers or sleepers, who in the four first cases are invariably youths or boys; and the seven of Samosata (whose actual date of martyrdom was June 25) also divide off from the July group in respect that two of them, the leaders, are old, and that the remaining five in the story are represented as joining these two, who adored the crucifix seven times a day.[1] We are left with four sets of Seven Martyrs, three of them sets of brothers, whose mothers were martyred before or after them, they themselves suffering between July 10 and August 1.

That the Seven Sleepers are of the same myth stock, is clear. In the Musæum Victorium of Rome is, or was, a plaster group of them, in which clubs lie beside two of them; a knotty club near another; axes near two others; aud a torch near the seventh.[2] Now the general feature of the other martyrdoms is the variety of the tortures imposed. Of the first seven, one is flogged to death with loaded whips, two with clubs, one thrown over a precipice, and three beheaded: and of the sons of Symphorosa each one dies a distinct death. The seven Maccabees are not so much particularised: but of the seven of Samosata, the first, who is old, is flogged with loaded whips like the eldest son of Felicitas; and though all are crucified they are finally despatched in three different ways. Again, though the Sleepers are commonly conceived, naturally, in their final Rip Van Winkle aspect; in the plaster group they are beardless, and "in ancient martyrologies and other writings they are frequently called boys". In the Koran again,[3] still youths, and still "testifying" in bad times, they sleep, *with their eyes open*, for 309 years—a longer period than that of the Christian legend, which gives them a sleep of only some 227 years[4]—and they are guarded by a dog; while the Deity "turned them to the right and to the left", and the sun when it arose passed on the right of their cave, and when it set passed them on the left; a sufficiently obvious indication of the solar

[1] For these legends see Butler's or any other "Lives of the Saints", under the dates given.

[2] Butler, ed. 1812, etc., vii, 359-60.

[3] Sura 18, "The Cave". Rodwell's trans. p. 212.

[4] In one version · in others the time is under 200 years.

division of the year. And the mythic dog, Mahommedans believe, is to go with the Seven to heaven. He is, of course, of the breed of the dogs who, in certain old Semitic mysteries "were solemnly declared to be the brothers of the mystæ";[1] and his connexion with the Sleepers doubtless hinges on the ancient belief that he "has the use of his sight both by night and by day".[2]

Seven, as the reader need hardly be reminded, is a "sacred number"[3] that constantly figures in Jewish, Vedic, and other ancient lore; and there is reason to surmise here, as in so many other cases, a Christian connexion with Mithraism. Among the admittedly Mithraic remains in the Catacombs is a fresco representing a banquet of seven persons in Mithraic caps, who are labelled as the *Septem Pii Sacerdotes*, the seven pious priests.[4] Now, the very Catholic authorities who admit the Mithraic character of the picture, have put forward an exactly similar one as being Christian, stating that it is common, without a word of misgiving or explanation, beyond a preposterous suggestion that it represents the meeting of Jesus with *seven* disciples (John, xxi, 1-13) after his resurrection. "It is not stated", argue these exegetes, "that He Himself sat down and partook of the meal with them".[5] So that we are to assume the Catacomb artist painted the seven fisher disciples, on the shore of the lake, sitting on a couch, in Mithraic caps, banqueting at an elaborately laid table in the presence of their Lord and Master, whose figure is considerately left to the imagination. To such desperate shifts will unreasoning piety resort rather than face disturbing facts. It is perfectly plain that the picture is either Mithraic pure and simple, or an exact Christian imitation of a Mithraic ceremony; and indeed it is very likely that the story in the fourth Gospel, which is evidently an addition, was one more fiction to explain a ritual usage. The picture could not have been painted for the story; but the story might very well be framed to suit the rite, which existed before

[1] Robertson Smith, "Religion of the Semites", p. 273.
[2] Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris", c. 44.
[3] "An infinite number of beauties may be extracted from a careful contemplation of it." *Philo Judæus*, Bohn trans. iii, 265.
[4] "Roma Sotteranea", as cited, Appendix B, vol ii, p. 355.
[5] Plate xvii, vol. ii, and pp. 67-8.

the painting. And here at least Mithraism had handed on to Christianity an institution of ancient India, for the seven priests figure repeatedly in the Rig Veda in connexion with the worship of Agni.[1]

We cannot here, of course, trace such a myth minutely to all its parallels; and there is a risk of oversight in bracketing it with all the Sevens of general mythology. The Rev. Sir George Cox traces these generally to the seven stars of Ursa Major:

"The seven stars" [first *rikshas*, bears; later *rishis*, shiners, sages] "became the abode of the Seven Poets or sages, who enter the ark with Menu (Minos) and reappear as the Seven Wise Men of Hellas, the Seven Children of Rhodos and Helios (Pind. Ol. vii, 132) and the Seven Champions of Christendom."[2] "Epimenides . . . . while tending sheep, fell asleep one day in a cave, and did not awake until more than fifty years had passed away. But Epimenides was one of the Seven Sages, who reappear in the Seven Manes of Leinster [ref. to Fergusson, "The Irish Before the Conquest"] and in the Seven Champions of Christendom; and thus the idea of the Seven Sleepers was at once suggested."[3]

Sir George Cox, however, does not connect these groups with the sets of Seven Martyrs; whereas Christian and Teutonic mythology alike entitle us to do so. In every case the point is that the Seven are to *rise again*, that being the doctrinal lesson in the story of the Maccabees as well as in those of the Christian martyrs. In the northern Sagas the Seven Sleepers are the sons of Mimer, "the ward of the middle-root of the world-tree"; they are "put to sleep" in "bad times" after their father's death; and they awake at the blast of the trumpet of Ragnarök. They are in fact the "seven seasons", the seven changes of the weather, the seven "economic months" of northern lore; and in Germany and Sweden the day of the Seven Sleepers is a popular test-day of the weather, as St. Swithin's day—July 15: we are al-

[1] Rig Veda Sanhita, Wilson's trans. i, 101, 156; iii, 115, 120, etc. It was probably Mithraic example that led to the creation of seven *epulones*, rulers of the sacrificial feasts, in place of the original three; as later the institution of the seven Christian deacons. The *Septemviri Epulones* appear often in inscriptions.

[2] "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," p. 26.

[3] *Id.* p. 225.

ways in July—is for us.[1] Now, whereas the names of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus—Maximian, Malchus, Martinian, Dionysius, John, Serapion, Constantine—have no connexion with a weather-myth, the very first name of the *Septem Fratres Martyres* is Januarius, and the list includes the names of Felix, Sylvanus, Vitalis, and Martialis, all which have a seasonal suggestion. So too have the names alike of Felicitas, *Happiness*, and Symphorosa=propitious, useful, profitable. It is not to be supposed, of course, that the myth could always keep the same cast; and it may be that it is at bottom the same as that of the seven boy and girl victims of the Minotaur in the legend of Theseus; but there is certainly a close kinship between the Teutonic and Christian forms under notice. In the view of Dr. Rydberg, the myth is originally Teutonic; though he notes that "Gregorius says that he is the first who recorded in the Latin language" the miracle of the Seven Sleepers, "not before known to the Church of Western Europe. As his authority he quotes 'a certain Syrian', who had interpreted the story for him. There was also need of a man from the Orient as an authority when a hitherto unknown miracle was to be presented—a miracle that had transpired (*sic.* trans.) in a cave near Ephesus." It might be answered to this not only that, as Dr. Rydberg himself candidly notes, the sleeping Endymion was located in a cave in Latmos near Ephesus, but that the seven Pleiades of Greek mythology were rain-givers, and presided over navigation, just as he says the northern Seven Sleepers did. It is doubtless this idea that occurs in the legend of the Seven Virgins of Ancyra, whom the persecutor drowns in a lake, and whose holy day, May 18, is set just about the time the Pleiades rise.[2] But Gregory's derivation of the Christian myth from the East, where also are located the *Septem Fratres Martyres*, brings us back to our bearings as regards the present enquiry.

[1] Rydberg's "Teutonic Mythology", Eng. trans. 1889, pp. 488-494.

[2] The lake itself, in the Christian legend, is the scene of a local water-worship in connexion with Pagan Goddesses. Now, the Semites attached a special sanctity to groups of Seven Wells; and the Arabic name given to (presumably) one such group signifies the Pleiades. See Smith's "Religion of the Semites", pp. 153, *n.*, 165, 168.

§ 2. The occurrence of all these dates of "sevens" in July, or just after July, the seventh month, is a very remarkable coincidence; and it is impossible to miss the surmise that they have a connexion with the month's ordinal number. But further surmises are suggested by the fact that in the Krishna legends there is a variation, and an evident confusion, as to the numerical place of the God in the list of his mother's children, of whom he would appear in some versions to have been the seventh, while commonly he is the eighth.[1] Devakî's eight children are said to have been seven sons and a daughter; but only the six sons are said to have been killed by Kansa; while in the Bhâgavat Purâna her seventh child is Bala Râma, and, he being "transferred" to the womb of Rohinî, her seventh pregnancy is given out as ending in miscarriage. It is hardly possible to doubt that there has been manipulation of an earlier myth-form; and the suspicion is strengthened by the confused fashion in which it is told that after the birth of the divine child the parents' eyes were closed by Vishnu, so that "they again thought that a child was born unto them"—a needless and unintelligible detail.[2] A fuller knowledge than I possess of the Vedas and other early Indian literature may disclose the original form of the myth, which is certainly pre-Krishnaite. "In the Veda, the sun, in the form of Mârtânda, is the eighth son born of Aditi; and his mother casts him off, just as Devakî, who is at times represented as an incarnation of Aditi, removes Krishna."[3] It is almost utterly idle, in the present state of our knowledge, to speculate on the basis of such a myth; but it may be at least suggested that the six slain children of Devakî may in earlier legend have been seven,[4] and that these seven sons of the

[1] Compare M. Barth's account with that of Maurice ("History of Hindostan", ii, 330) who follows the Bhagavat Purâna, but cites Balde, who made Krishna the seventh son.

[2] It is made partly intelligible in the "Prem-Sagar" ("Ocean of Love") a Hindi verson at second hand of the tenth book of the Bhâgavat Purâna. The idea there is that the parents are made to forget the preliminary revelation of the divinity. Cp. Cox, p. 368.

[3] Barth, "Religions of India", p. 173. See Wilson's Rig Veda Sanhita, vi, 199. Aditi "bore Mârtânda for the birth and death of human beings".

[4] M. Pavie, in his translation (*Krishna et sa Doctrine*, 1852) of Lalatch's Hindi version of the tenth book of the Bhâgavat Purâna,

"celestial man"[1] may be duplicates of the seven sleeping sons of the northern Mimer, whom we have seen identified with "the seven seasons". The Christian legends have shown us how the sleepers (always young) could be transformed into martyrs. It is a curious coincidence that in one version of the legend of the twelve Hebrew patriarchs (Gen. xxx, 20-24) the undesired Leah bears to the solar Jacob seven children, six sons and a daughter, before the desired Rachel bears the favorite, the solar Joseph; just as in the dual legend of Râma and Krishna, the younger brother becomes the greater, as happens in so many Biblical cases of pairs of brothers—Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Reuben and Joseph, Pharez and Zarah, Manasseh and Ephraim.

The suspicion of manipulation is further strengthened by the fact that while the Birth Festival falls in July, the date of the birth in late texts appears to be August. It could be wished that Professor Weber had brought his scholarly knowledge to bear on the problem of the meaning of these dates rather than on the impracticable thesis he has adopted from his supernaturalist predecessors. As matters stand, I can but point to the possibility that a myth of the birth of seven inferior or ill-fated children, followed by that of one who attains supreme Godhood, may be a primitive cosmogonic explanation of the relation of the "seven planets" to the deity, which is certainly the basis of the familiar myth of the "Seven Spirits" who figure so much in the Mazdean system and in the Christian Apocalypse. Mithra, the chief of the seven Amshaspands or planetary spirits of the Persian system, who are clearly akin to the "Adityas" of the Vedas,[2] rose in his solar character to virtual supremacy. As to the "seven seasons" notion in old Aryan mythology, it is impossible to speak. The number in Hindu lore as preserved is six[3]; and though these might be connected with the six slain children of Devakî, they do not square with the eight births of Aditi. But for this last precedent, it might be suspected that Krishna had been made the eighth child of

heads the first chapter: "King Kansa kills the first seven children of his sister Devakî," though the text is not explicit to that effect.

[1] Barth, as cited, p. 172.

[2] Tiele, "Outlines," p. 169.

[3] Jones in "As. Res.", iii, 258; Patterson, *Id.*, viii, 66.

the Divine Lady because he was the eighth Incarnation of Vishnu; but the Aditi myth is a strong reminder that the story of the eight children may be older than the scheme of the Avatars, the genesis of which is so difficult to trace.[1] And here we are reminded that the number eight figures in the Vedas as well as seven, there being indeed *eight* "planets" in the Indian system.[2] Yet again, in Egyptian mythology there are "eight personified cosmic powers" "from whom the city of Thut, Hermopolis, derived its Egyptian name", and who are "always united with Thut, but nevertheless to be distinguished from his seven assistants".[3] It would seem as if an eight-myth and a seven myth, both of irretrievable antiquity, had been entangled[4] too early to permit of any certainty as to their respective origins.

On that view, of course, the possibility remains that a week-myth may after all be bound up with the legend of Krishna and the six slain children. The names of the days of the week, ancient and modern, remind us that the "seven planets"—that is, the five planets anciently known, and the sun and moon—formed the basis of the seven-day division of time, in which the sun has always the place of honor.[5]

Now, it is a suggestive though imperfect coincidence that among the ancient Semites, who consecrated the

[1] For an ingenious if inconclusive attempt to find an astrological solution of the problem, see Salverte's *Essai sur les Noms*, 1824, vol. ii, Note C. Salverte has followed some account which makes Krishna the seventh child of Devakî.

[2] Barth, as cited, p. 261, *n*.

[3] Tiele, "Outlines", p. 49. Cp. Herodotus, ii, 43, 46, 145, 156.

[4] Compare Macrobius, *In Somn. Scip.* i, 6. Colebrooke ("As. Res.," viii, 82-3) notes that "the eight Sactis, or enemies of as many deities, are also called Matris or mothers. . . . However, some authorities reduce the number to seven."

[5] On this point, in connexion with India, see Von Bohlen, *Das Alte Indien*, 1830, ii. 245 ff. The origin of the week appears still to be disputed. Le Clerc long ago urged the planetary basis of the week against Grotius, who accepted the Judaic ("On the Truth of the Chr. Rel." i, 16); but Prof. Whitney ("Life and Growth of Language," p. 81) writes that "the planetary day-names would have remained to Europe, as to India, a mere astrologers' fancy, but for Christianity and its inheritance of the Jewish seven-day period as a leading measure of time"—a perplexing statement to me. The Day of the Sun or Lord's Day was certainly a popular institution under Paganism.

seventh day (*i.e. Saturday*), to their supreme and sinister deity Saturn, the planet most distant from the sun, the priests on that day, *clothed in black*, ministered to the God in his *black* six-sided temple[1]—he having made the world in six days, the perfect number. This deity, like the black Krishna, bears signs of transformation from bad to good, from inferior to superior, since in ancient Italy he was both a good and a malevolent deity.[2] Of course Ovid's etymology is untenable, but it is none the less significant that for him Saturn, the *Deus Latius*, or God of Latium, is the *Deus Latens*, or "hiding God",[3] considering that Saturn was commonly opposed to Jupiter, the *Deus Latiaris*, equally God of Latium, the illustrious king of the race.[4] It may be that, as in so many other myths, the name helped the theory as to Saturn's "hidden" character; but in any case the theory was persistent; and Herodian, writing in the third century, tells that the Latins kept the festival of the Saturnalia in December "to commemorate the hidden God",[5] just before the feast of the New Year in honor of Janus, whose image had two faces, because in him was the end of the old and the beginning of the new year. Thus he was celebrated at the time of the greatest cold, the festival lasting for seven days, from the 17th December; but the time was one of universal goodwill, calling up thoughts of the golden age past, and to come.[6] And not

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[1] Gesenius, *Commentar über d. Jesaia*, Zweiter Theil, Beilage 2, p. 344, citing Nordberg, Lex. S. 76 ff.

[2] Cp. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, i, 38; Vergil, Ecl. iv, 6; Georg. i, 336, ii, 538; Horace, 2 Carm. xvii, 23; Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, vii, 13; Juvenal, vi, 569; Propertius, iv, i, 106; Macrobius, *In Somn. Scip.*, i, 19. Compare the words "saturnine", signifying gloomy, and "saturnian" as signifying the golden age. See further Lucan, i, 652, on which a curious question arises. Lucan speaks of Saturn as a baleful star with "*black fires*." Bentley proposed to read *Capricorni* for *Saturni*, giving ingenious but doubtful reasons. Mythological confusion was doubtless caused by the meteorological significance of the star, as apart from the deity, who was by many reckoned the chief of the Gods, and identified with the sky and the sun (Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i, 7, 10, 22).

[3] *Fasti*, i, 238.

[4] Preller, *Röm. Myth.*, p. 85.

[5] B. i, c. 16. Cp. Tacitus, *Hist.* v, 4; and Preller, p. 413. It is to be noted, too, that Kronos (=Saturn) was represented in art with his head veiled (K. O. Müller, "Ancient Art", as cited, p. 520).

[6] Preller, p. 414; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i, 10.

the least curious parallel between this and the Krishnaite festival and our own Christmas festival is the old custom of making, at the time of the Saturnalia, little images, which were given as presents, especially to children.[1]

This is away from the week myth. To return to that: we find that in seven-gated Thebes, Apollo the Sun-God is lord of the seventh gate[2] because lord of the number seven, and born on the seventh day of the month;[3] and though in the Hellenic legend of the seven chiefs who die in the attack on the seven-gated city the basic myth is much sophisticated, it can hardly be doubted that there is a dualist nature-myth behind the detail of the mutual slaughter of the two opposed brothers at the gate of Apollo. More obvious is the conception as we have it plausibly explained by Sir George Cox, followed by Mr. Tylor, in the case of Grimm's story of the wolf and the seven little goats. The wolf is the darkness (Kansa was black) who tries to swallow the seven days of the week, and does swallow six, while the seventh *hides*.[4] In the Teutonic story the six days come out again, which they do not in the Hindu; but the myth may be the same at bottom. In any case, here we have six or seven slain "children", whose fate makes part of the story of Krishna, the Hindu god honored in the seventh month; and these compare strikingly with the Christian sets of Seven Martyrs, who are all either "children" of a mother who dies with them, or simply boys, as in the case of the Sleepers of Ephesus; and who are so curiously associated with the same month. I am not arguing that the Christian myth must have filtered in the early centuries A.C. from India: I have no information as to whether the Hindu ritual includes any allusion to Krishna's martyred brothers. But at the very least the mythological basis of all the stories should be plain enough to help to disabuse all candid minds of the notion that Krishnaism drew its myths from Christianity. Here again the myth is embedded in the Hindu story, while it only fortuitously appears in Christian mythology.

§ 3. There is one other possible key to this part of the

[1] Preller, last cit.; Macrobius, i, 11.

[2] Æschylus, "Seven against Thebes", 801. Each gate has its God, and the virgin Minerva presides over all.

[3] Scholiast on Æsch.

[4] Cox, p. 177, *note*. Cp. Tylor, "Primitive Culture," i, 302–8.

Krishna myth, which should not be overlooked. It would appear that in old Hebrew usage the *seventh* month was also known as the *first* month, owing to a change which had been made in the reckoning. Wellhausen writes:

"The *ecclesiastical* festival of new year in the priestly Code is also autumnal. The *yom teruah* (Lev. xxiii, 24, 25; Num. xxix, 1 seq.) falls on the first new moon of autumn; and it follows from a tradition confirmed by Lev. xxv, 9, 10, that this day was celebrated as new year (ראש השנה). But it is always spoken of as the first of the *seventh* month. That is to say, the civil new year has been separated from the ecclesiastical and been transferred to spring; the ecclesiastical can only be regarded as a relic surviving from an earlier period. . . . . It appears to have first begun to give way under the influence of the Babylonians, who observed the spring era". [*Note.* "In Exod. xii, 2, this change of era is formally commanded by Moses: 'This month (the passover month) shall be the beginning of months unto you; it shall be to you the first of the months of the year'. According to George Smith, the Assyrian year commenced at the vernal equinox; the Assyrian use depends on the Babylonian. (*Assyrian Eponym Canon*, p. 19)."][1]

There seems reason to suppose that a similar change took place earlier in Egypt. "The beginning of the year, or the first of Thoth", says Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson, "was perhaps originally at a very different season".[2] But during the Sothic period, which subsisted from 1322 B.C. onwards, the usage would seem to have been substantially the same as it was in Cæsar's time, when the first of Thoth, or new year, fell on 29th August.[3] We have to note, too, that in Krishnaism itself there are different dates for the Birthday Festival, the Vârâha Purâna entirely departing from the accepted view. In that Purâna the Krishna Birth-Festival appears to be "only one of a whole series, amounting to twelve, which relate themselves to the ten—or rather eleven!—avatars of Vishnu as Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-Lion, Dwarf,[4] Bhârgava, (*i.e.*, Parasu

[1] Wellhausen, "Prolegomena to the History of Israel", Eng. tr. pp. 108-109.

[2] "Ancient Egyptians", abridged ed. ii, 254. Cp. "Bible Folk-Lore", 1884, p. 79.

[3] Wilkinson, p. 252.

[4] It is a small matter, but it may be as well to guard the English reader against a blunder which occurs in the Rev. Mr. Wood's translation of M. Barth's admirable book on "The Religions of

Râma), Râma, Krishna, Buddha, Kalkin, and Padmanâbha (*sic*)".[1] On which Professor Weber justly observes that the festival calendars of other peoples betray similar discrepancies. A case in point is that of Horus, who had more birthdays than one.[2] But enough, perhaps more than enough, of a mythological problem which on any view is subsidiary to our main inquiry.

XVI.

Finally, a much more important myth-parallel than the last—though I do not even here contend for more than the possibility of direct Christian borrowing—is that between the story of Krishna's "descent into hell" and the Christian dogma and legend of the same purport. In this last case as in others, Professor Weber would doubtless argue that India borrowed from Alexandria. The known historical fact is that the dogma of the "descent into hell" made its first formal appearance in the Christian Church in the formulary of the church of Aquileia late in the fourth century,[3] having before that time had great popular vogue, as may be inferred from the non-canonical Gospel of Nicodemus, which gives the legend at great length. Only in the sixth century[4] did it begin to be formally affirmed throughout the Church, Augustine having accepted it without exactly knowing what to make of it.[5] Here clearly was one more assimilation of a Pagan doctrine; for the Pagan vogue of the myth of a God who descended into the underworld was unquestionably very great. Osiris was peculiarly the judge of the dead;[6] and he goes to and comes from the Shades;[7] Hercules

India." On p. 170 there is an allusion to the Avatâra of "the Brahman Nain". This should be "the Brahman Dwarf" or "the Dwarf Bahmun". "Nain" is the French for dwarf, which the translator had misconceived; and "Bahmun", in some versions, was the dwarf's name. It is only fair to say that Mr. Wood seems to have done his work in general very well.

[1] Weber, pp. 260-1.

[2] Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris", c. 52.

[3] Nicolas, *Le Symbole des Apôtres*, 1867, pp. 221, 364.

[4] *Id.* pp. 217-8. [5] *Id.* p. 223.

[6] Herodotus, ii, 123. Compare any account of the Egyptian system.

[7] Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris", c. 19. Professor Tiele, indeed,

went to Hades before he went to heaven, his last labor being to carry away Cerberus, the three-headed dog; and then it was that he took away with him Theseus and Peirithous. Mercury, the Psychopompos, is not only the leader of souls to the Shades[1] but the guide of those who, like Hercules, return;[2] he being the "appointed messenger (angel) to Hades".[3]

In the myth of Venus and Adonis, the slain Sun-God passes six months of the year in the upper and six in the under world, as does the Sun itself; Orpheus goes to harp Eurydice out of Hades; and among the Thracian Getæ, who early adopted the belief in a happy immortality, the man-God Zalmoxis, otherwise Gebeleizis, who had introduced that doctrine, disappeared for three years in a subterraneous habitation he had made for himself, and on

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states that "Osiris, according to the old monuments, comes back to earth no more" ("Hist. of the Egypt. Rel." Eng. tr. p. 43); but Plutarch's words are explicit as to his return to visit Horus. In any case, the real point is, of course, that the God does not die; and his residence in the other world as Judge of the Dead in the Egyptian system is quite a different thing from residence in the Hades of the Greeks.

[1] Odyssey, xxiv, 1-10.

[2] *Id.* xi. 626.

[3] Hom. Hymn, 572. Long ago, according to the indignant Mosheim (note on Cudworth, Harrison's trans. iii, 298), one Peter a Sarn "dared to compare our blessed Savior to Mercury, and to advance this as one of the principal arguments by which he attempts to bear out the comparison, that Mercury is said by the poets to discharge the twofold function of dismissing souls to Tartarus and evoking them from thence". Mosheim's own conviction was that "Beyond all doubt a man of that name" [*i.e.* Mercurius, not Hermes] "had lived in ancient Greece and had acquired for himself a high reputation by swiftness of foot, eloquence, and other virtues and vices; and I have scarcely a doubt that he held the office of public runner and messenger to Jupiter, an ancient king of Thessaly". Such was the light of orthodoxy on human history one hundred and fifty years ago. It is noteworthy that Agni, the Child-God, messenger of the Gods, mediator, and "wise one" (the Logos) of the Vedas, was a leader of souls to the Shades (with Pûshan, a form of the sun) just as was Hermes (Barth, p. 23; Tiele, "Outlines", p. 114). Hermes himself is a development of Hermeias, perhaps the Vedic dog Sârameya, who was once possibly "the child of the dawn", and whose name was given to the two dogs of the Indian Hades (Max Müller, "Nat. Relig.", pp. 453, 483; Tiele, p. 211). But this and other identifications of Greek and Indian mythological names have been challenged, along with the whole theory of the derivation of the Aryan race from India. See Lang's "Myth, Ritual, and Religion", i, 23, citing Mann-

his unexpected return the Thracians believed his teaching. So tells the incomparable Herodotus,[1] who "neither disbelieved nor entirely believed" the story in this evidently Euhemerized form. But the doctrine is universal, being obviously part of the myth of the death and resurrection of the Sun-God, either in the form of the equinoctial mystery in which he is three days between death and life, or in the general sense that he goes to the lower regions for his winter death before he comes to his strength again. It is bound up with the religion of Mithra. It is fully developed in the Northern myth of the Sun-God Balder, who, wounded in a great battle, in which some of his kindred oppose him, goes to the underworld of Hel, where he grows strong again by drinking sacred mead, and whence he is to return at the Ragnarök, or Twilight of the Gods, when Gods and men are alike to be regenerated.[2] Common to all races, it appears poetically in our legend of Arthur, the gold-clothed solar child, born as was Hercules of a dissembling father, and like Cyrus secretly reared, who after being stricken in a great battle in the West, in which the British kindred slay each other as do the Yâdavas of the Krishna lore, goes to the island valley of Avilion to heal him of his grievous wound, and to return. In pre-Christian Greece, from a very distant period, such a myth was certainly current—witness the visit of the solar Ulysses to the Shades in the Odyssey—and it was doubtless bound up with the doctrine of immortality conveyed in the Mysteries.[3] As the latter belief gained ground, the myth of descent and return, always prominent in the fable of Proserpina, would become more prominent; and in the "Orphic" period, this fascinating motive was

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hardt. The old race theory may now be said to be exploded (see Dr. Isaac Taylor's newly published work on "The Origin of the Aryans", which gives the results of scholarship on the subject); but the question of the relations between Indian and other myths remains to be worked out on the new lines.

[1] B. iv, 93–96.

[2] See the minute and scholarly examination of this myth in Dr. Rydberg's "Teutonic Mythology" (recently tr. in Eng. by Dr. R. B. Anderson. Sonnenschein and Co.), pp. 252-264, 492, 530-8, 595, 653, 655, etc.

[3] K. O. Müller, "Hist. of Lit. of Anc. Greece", Lewis' tr. 1847, p. 231. Cp. Prof. Nettleship, "Essays in Latin Literature", pp. 105, 136-140, and Mosheim's extracts in note on Cudworth, iii, 296.

fully established in religious literature. In one "Orphic" poem, the *Minyas*, which elaborately described the lower regions, we have the exact title-formula of the later Christian doctrine, ἡ ἐς Ἅϊδου κατάβασις, "the Descent into Hades."[1] But there is reason to believe that the "Orphic" system was a result of the influence of foreign doctrine[2]; and indeed, of all mythic analogues to the Christian myth of the descent into Hell, I can remember none more exact than the story of the similar descent of Krishna. Take the account of Moor:

"It is related in the Padma Purâna, and in the Bhâgavat, that the wife of Kasya, the Guru or spiritual preceptor to Krishna, complained to the incarnate deity that the ocean had swallowed up her children on the coast of Gurjura or Gujerat, and she supplicated Krishna for their restoration. Arriving at the ocean, Varuna, its regent, assured Krishna that not he but the sea-monster Sankesura had stolen the children. Krishna sought and after a violent conflict slew the demon, and tore him from his shell, named Panchajanya, which he bore away in memorial of his victory, and afterwards used in battle by way of a trumpet. Not finding the children in the dominions of Varuna, he descended to the infernal city, Yamapura, and sounding his tremendous shell, struck such terror into Yama that he ran forth to make his prostrations, and restored the children of Kasya, with whom he returned to their rejoicing mother.

"Sonnerat notices two basso-relievos, placed at the entrance of the choir of Bordeaux cathedral: one represents the ascension of our Savior to heaven on an eagle; the other his descent, where he is stopped by Cerberus at the gates of hell, and Pluto is seen at a distance armed with a trident.

"In Hindu pictures, Vishnu, who is identified with Krishna, is often seen mounted on the eagle Garuda. . . . . And were a Hindu artist to handle the subject of Krishna's descent to hell, which I never saw, he would most likely introduce Cerbura, the infernal three-headed dog[3] of their legends, and

[1] K. O. Müller, as cited, p. 233. Cp. Pausanias, ix, 31, as to the poems attributed to Hesiod.

[2] Compare Mr. Lang's "Myth, Ritual, and Religion", i, 291-3, and Grote and Lobeck as cited by him.

[3] "Yama, the regent of hell, has two dogs, according to the Purânas, one of them named Cerbura and Sabula or *varied*; the other Syâma or *black*; the first of whom is also called Trisiras, or *with three heads*, and has the additional epithets of Calmâsha, Chitra, and Cirmîra, all signifying *stained* or *spotted*. In Pliny, the words Cimmerium and Cerberium seem used as synonymous; but, however that

Yama, their Pluto, with the *trisula* or trident: a further presumption of early intercommunication between the pagans of the eastern and western hemispheres." [1]

For obvious reasons, the whole of this passage is suppressed in the Rev. W. O. Simpson's 1864 edition of Moor's work. But the parallel goes even further than Moor represents; for the descent of Jesus into hell, curiously enough, was anciently figured as involving a forcing open of the jaws of a huge serpent or dragon.[2] Thus, whether or not the Christian adaptation was made directly from Indian communications, it carried on a myth which, appearing in some guise in all faiths, figured in ancient India in a form more closely parallel with the Christian than any other. The appropriation would seem to have been made confusedly, from different sources. Christ in one view went to Hades in his capacity of avenger[3]—an idea evidently derived from the Osirian system, which, however, closely approaches the Indian in the story of Osiris descending to the Shades on the prayer of Queen Garmathone and restoring her son to life. In another view, which prevails in the main legend as given in the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Christ descends to the Shades, where Satan and Death are one, on a mission of liberation, taking all the "saints" of previous history with him to heaven, but further restoring to earth for three days the two sons of the blessed high-priest Simeon, who had taken the babe Jesus in his

may be, the Cerbura of the Hindus is indubitably the Cerberus of the Greeks" (Wilford, in "Asiatic Researches", iii, 408). There seems some doubt as to the antiquity of the "three heads" in Indian mythology: M. Barth (p. 23) speaks only of "two dogs" as guarding the road to Yama's realm; but the notion seems sufficiently Hindu. See note above as to the Sârameya, and compare Gubernatis, "Zool. Myth.", i, 49, as to Cerberi. Prof. Müller decides ("Nat. Rel." p. 453) that the name Kerberos is from the Sanskrit *Sarvarî*, "the night" —which chimes with Wilford's definitions; but here the assumption of derivation must be discarded. In northern mythology, there is sometimes one hell-dog, sometimes more (Rydberg, as cited pp. 276, 280, 362); and there is in the underworld a three-headed *giant*. (Rydberg, pp. 295-6; Cp. Bergmann, *Le Message de Skirnir*, 1871, pp. 99, 154).

[1] "Hindu Pantheon", pp. 213-4. Compare the varying account of Maurice (ii, 377) following the Persian version of the Bhâgavat.

[2] See the engraving in Hone's "Ancient Mysteries Described", and that on p. 385 of Didron's "Christian Iconography", Bohn trans. In the latter the saved appear *as children*.

[3] Augustine, Letter to Evodius, cited by Nicolas, p. 228, *n*.

arms. Now, not only was the Brahman Kasya the Guru of Krishna, but his children were *two sons*.[1] Again, for the more canonical story of Jesus going to preach to "the spirits in prison",[2] which was adopted by many of the fathers[3] and became bound up with the Pagan-Christian doctrine of purgatory, there is a parallel in the Purâna myth, in which Krishna, in the earlier part of his search for the lost children, reaches the under-sea or over-sea region of "Cusha-Dweepa, where he instructed the Cutila-Cesas in the whole system of religious and civil duties".[4] Doubtless we shall be told once more that the Indian legend borrows from the Apocryphal Gospel, without any attempt being made to show how or whence the Christian compiler got his story. To which I once more answer that in the Indian version the myth has all the stamp of the luxuriant and spontaneous Hindu imagination, while in the Christian mythology it is one of the most obviously alien elements, and in the detailed legend it is a confused patchwork. In the Purâna, Krishna's blast on his shell at the gate of the Shades is perfectly Indian; in "Nicodemus" the thunderous voice of Christ at hell-gate may indeed be compared to the shouting of Mars in Homer, but is obviously inspired by *some* primitive myth, and may much more easily be conceived as suggested-by than as suggesting the Krishnaite tale. And if we are to choose between (*a*) the proposition that it was through a Christian legend that India became possessed of a myth-motive common to half-a-dozen ancient faiths before Christianity was heard of, and (*b*) the inference that the Christian legend was more or less directly inspired by the Indian legend in something very like the form in which we now have it—there can

[1] Maurice, as last cited.

[2] 1 Peter, iii, 19.

[3] Clemens Alexandrinus, who accepted it, is in that connexion, I know not why, stigmatised as heretical. Compare the Abbé Cognat's *Clement d' Alexandrie*, p. 466, and Justin's "Remarks upon Eccles. Hist.", ed. Trollope, i, 231. These writers speak as if there were no scriptural basis for the doctrine of the preaching in limbo. It is important, however, to remember that Clement drew more systematically on pagan religion than any other Christian before or since. See Mosheim's "Commentaries on Christian Affairs", Vidal's trans., ii, 115-125, 186-190.

[4] Wilford in As. Res., iii, 399. *Cf.* pp. 349, 370.

surely be little room for hesitation among unprejudiced students.

In regard to this, however, as to some of the other myth-parallels already noticed, it might very well be that the Christian appropriation was made through the channel of Buddhism, whence so many elements of the Christian system are now admitted by almost all scholars to have come. I have devoted the less attention to that side of the case because it has been so fully dealt with by other and better-equipped inquirers—recently in England, for instance, by Mr. Arthur Lillie in his "Buddhism in Christendom" and other works. In regard to Buddhism the actual historical *connexions* with Christianity are in large part made out *à posteriori*; and if sometimes points are stretched, the general argument is irresistible. But the argument for Buddhist priority over Christianity owes a large part of its strength to the very fact that, as we shall see, the Buddhist legends are to a great extent themselves refashionings of Krishna legends. The weakness of the Christian position is that it claims originality for a body of lore which, obviously non-historical, is as obviously myth in a late and literary though trivial stage; and that this claim is made with no attempt at explaining how such myths could so appear without antecedents. For the Buddhist mythology, as M. Senart has shown, the antecedents lie in that very Krishnaism which the prejudiced Christist assumes to be borrowed from his own, so to say, virgin-born mythology. For the Krishnaite mythology, again, as we have in part seen and shall see further, antecedents lay in part in the simpler Vedic mythology, and may further be reasonably assumed to have existed in the great mass of popular religion that *must* have flourished outside the sacerdotal system of the Vedas. The scientific grievance against scholars like Professor Weber is that they claim priority on certain points for Christian myth without once asking the question as to whence the Christian myth itself came.

If, then, it be shown that any of the myths before discussed, came to Christism through Buddhism, my argument is not impugned, but strengthened, unless (which is unlikely) it be contended that the Buddhist form preceded the Krishnaite. In some cases it is plainly probable that the Buddhist legend was the go-between. Thus the late

Christian myth of the synchronous birth of the Christ's cousin, John the Baptist, is reasonably to be traced to the Buddhist myth of the synchronous birth of the Buddha's cousin Ananda,[1] rather than to the Krishnaite motive of Arjuna or Bala Râma: but this course is reasonable chiefly because the Krishnaite system gives an origin for the Buddhist myth. So, too, the motive of the Descent into Hell may have been taken by the Christists from the Buddhist fable of Buddha's expedition to preach "like all former Buddhas" the law to his mother in the upper-world of Tawadeintha, since there not only is the preaching extended to a multitude of others of the unearthly population, but there appear also the mythic "two"—in this case "two sons of Nats", who obtain from Buddha "the reward of Thautapan".[2] Certainly Krishna's literal *descent*, and the item of the dragon, are details that come specially close to the Christian myth; and one would have expected the Christian borrower to introduce the Christ's mother if he had before him the Buddha legend as we now have it. Bût on the other hand he may well have had a different version; or some of the details may have been added to the Christian story at different times, as they must have been in the Buddhist. All I stand upon definitely is that the Krishna stories are almost always the more primitive: and that if they are the basis of the mythology of the Buddhist system—a system which so largely enters into the Christian—it is plainly unreasonable to presume that Krishnaism would borrow again from Christianity. In the case of the "preaching to the spirits in prison", in particular, the Buddhist myth is on the face of it pre-Buddhistic, yet Indian. Our general argument, then, for the antiquity of Krishnaism as compared with Christianity, holds good through a whole series of myth-motives in respect of which Christianity is unquestionably a borrower, and sometimes clearly a borrower from India. It now remains to indicate briefly, independently of the Christian argument, the mythical meaning or derivation of Krishnaism itself.

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[1] Bigandet's "Life of Gaudama", Trübner's ed. i, 36.
[2] *Id.* pp. 219-225.

XVII.

§ 1. We have seen that the latest claims as to the Christian origin of Krishnaite legends are only repetitions of guesses made by pious missionaries in the days before comparative mythology, and that there is really no more scientific argument behind the later than behind the earlier statements. It is also the fact, however, that sound and satisfying explanations of Krishnaism on the basis of universal mythology were sketched nearly a century ago; though they have been completely ignored by the later adherents of the missionary view, including even the scholarly and open-minded Professor Weber.

Not only was the solar character of Krishna recognised by the first European investigators,[1] being indeed avowed by the Brahmans, but the main elements of the whole myth were soon judiciously analysed. Take the following early exposition:

"The Earth is represented as a Cow, the cow of plenty; and, as the planets were considered by the Hindus to be so many habitable Earths, it was natural to describe them by the same hieroglyphic; and as the Sun directs their motions, furnishes them with light, and cherishes them with his genial heat, Krishna, the symbol of the Sun, was portrayed as an herdsman, sportive, amorous, inconstant.

"The twelve signs are represented as twelve beautiful Nymphs: the Sun's apparent passage from one to the other is described as the roving of the inconstant Krishna. This was probably the ground-work of Jayadeva's elegant poem, the Gîta Gôvinda. It is evidently intended by the circular dance exhibited in the Rasijatra. On a moveable circle, twelve Krishnas are placed alternately with twelve Gopis, hand-in-hand, forming a circle; the God is thus multiplied to attach him to each respectively, to denote the Sun's passage through all the signs, and by the rotary motion of the machine, the revolution of the year is pointed out.

[1] The monk Paulinus (quoted by Kleuker, *Abhandlungen*, as before cited, ii, 236), was satisfied that Krishna "originally (*primigenie*) signified the sun, and indeed the sun in eclipse" [here giving a meaning for the "black"] and that "the fable was accordingly to be referred to astronomy". He further saw that the mythic wars meant that "the sun in the heavens fought with planets, stars, and clouds", and that the quasi-historic (it is not clear if he thought there was ever a real) Krishna was as it were a "terrestial sun or" [here anticipating Lassen] "Hercules, as Arrian has it".

"Krishna obtains a victory on the banks of the Yamunâ over the great serpent Caliya Nâga, which had poisoned the air, and destroyed the herds in that region. This allegory may be explained upon the same principle as the exposition given of the destruction of the serpent Python by the arrows of Apollo. It is the Sun, which, by the powerful action of its beams, purifies the air and disperses the noxious vapors of the atmosphere. Both in the Padma and Garuda [Purânas] we find the serpent Caliya, whom Krishna slew in his childhood, amongst the deities 'worshipped on this day, as the Pythian snake, according to Clemens, was adored with Apollo at Delphi'. Perhaps this adventure of Krishna, with the Caliya Nâga, may be traced on our sphere, for we find there Serpentarius on the banks of the heavenly Yamunâ, the milky way, contending as it were with an enormous serpent, which he grasps with both his hands.

"The identity of Apollo Nomios and Krishna is obvious: both are inventors of the flute; and Krishna is disappointed by Tulasi as Apollo was deluded by Daphne, each nymph being changed to a tree; hence the *tulasi* is sacred to Krishna as the *laurus* was to Apollo.

"The story of Nâreda visiting the numerous chambers of Krishna's seraglio and finding Krishna everywhere, appears to allude to the universality of the Sun's appearance at the time of the Equinoxes, there being then no part of the earth where he is not visible in the course of the twenty-four hours. The Demons sent to destroy Krishna are perhaps no more than the monsters of the sky, which allegorically may be said to attempt in vain to obstruct his progress through the Heavens. Many of the playful adventures of Krishna's childhood are possibly mere poetical embellishments to complete the picture."[1]

Here is a rational, a scientific explanation of the main outlines of the Krishna myth, which holds good independently of the author's further theory that the origin of Krishnaism lay in the separation of the sect of Vaishnavas from the Saivas, and that the legends may contain an element of allegory on the persecution of the new sect. The former part of that theory was put forward also by Colebrooke, who held that "the worship of Râma and of Krishna by the Vaishnavas, and that of Mahâdêva and Bhavânî by the Saivas and Sactas, have been introduced since the persecution of the Bauddhas and Jainas".[2] But

[1] Patterson, in "Asiatic Researches", viii (1803), pp. 64–5. As to the astronomic significance of the dance in Greece, see Donaldson, "Theatre of the Greeks," p. 24.

[2] "As. Res.," viii, 474.

the same sound scholar declares that he supposes both Râma and Krishna "to have been known characters in ancient fabulous history", but conjectures "that on the same basis new fables have been constructed, elevating those personages to the rank of Gods".[1] Hence he opposed the surmise that early references to Krishna in the sacred books were interpolations. There can be little doubt, I think, that Colebrooke would have admitted the "new fables" to be in many cases new only in their application, and to be really repetitions of the ancient myths of the race. This proposition, inductively proved, renders impregnable the earlier deductive position.

Every solar hero or deity necessarily repeats certain features in the myths of his predecessors; and this the more surely because on the one hand the popular fancy is so far from being clearly conscious of the identities between God and God, or hero and hero,[2] and because on the other the priest either sees in these, like the Jews, a system of types, or, like the Pagans, sees no harm in mystic correspondences. It is thus that so many dynasties of Gods have been built out of the same fabulous material. Now, though Krishna, figuring as he does as a demon in the Vedas, was presumably an outsiders' God even in the Vedic period, with what qualities we know not, we can find in the Vedas precedent for all his main features. Agni, the Fire-God, always tending to be identified with the Sun, is the prototype of the modern Krishna, not only in respect of being a marvellous child but of being a lover of maidens: "Agni, as Yama, is all that is born; as Yama, all that will be born: he is the lover of maidens, the husband of wives".[3] That, indeed, is an extremely natural characteristic, whether mystic or anthropomorphic, of all popular deities in primitive times; and M. Senart notes[4] that in a Vedic description of a storm, Soma, the personified God of the libation or eucharist, "plays among

[1] *Id.*, ix, 293.

[2] "The story of Perseus is essentially the same as the story of his more illustrious descendant [Hercules]; and the profound unconsciousness of the Argives that the two narratives are in their groundwork identical is a singular illustration of the extent to which men can have all their critical faculties lulled to sleep by mere differences of names or of local coloring in legends which are only modifications of a single myth" (Cox, "Mythol. of Aryan Nations", p. 303).

[3] "Wilson's tr. of Rig Veda Sanhita, i, 181.

[4] *Essai*, p. 321.

the Apas like a man among beautiful young girls". But "it is above all to the atmospheric Agni that we must trace voluptuous legends like those which have received such an important place in the Krishnaite myth";[1] and for the multiplications of Krishna also we find the prototype in the child Agni who, at his birth, "enters into all houses and disdains no man".[2] And this view is substantially adopted by the leading English mythologists. On the relations of Krishna with the Gopîs Sir George Cox writes:

'This myth is in strict accordance with the old Vedic phrase addressed to the Sun as the horse: "After thee is the chariot; after thee, Arvan, the man; after thee the cows; after thee the host of the girls". Thus, like Agni, Indra, and Yama, he is the husband of the wives, an expression which, in Professor Max Müller's opinion, was probably "meant originally for the evening sun as surrounded by the splendors of the gloaming, as it were by a more serene repetition of the dawn. The Dawn herself is likewise called the wife; but the expression 'husband of the wives' is in another passage clearly applied to the sinking sun, *R. V.* ix, 86, 32: 'The husband of the wives approaches the end'."'[3]

The same writer, who makes an independent and able analysis of the Krishna myth, sums up as follows on the general question:

"If it be urged that the attribution to Krishna of qualities or powers belonging to other deities is a mere device by which his devotees sought to supersede the more ancient gods, the answer must be that nothing is done in his case which has not been done in the case of almost every other member of the great company of the gods, and that the systematic adoption of the method is itself conclusive proof of the looseness and flexibility of the materials of which the cumbrous mythology of the Hindu epic poems is composed".[4] And again: "It is true, of course, that these myths have been crystallised round the name of Krishna in ages subsequent to the period during which the earliest Vedic literature came into existence; but the myths themselves are found in this older literature associated with other gods, and not always only in germ. Krishna as slaying the dragon is simply Indra smiting Vritra or Ahi, or Phoibos destroying the Python. There is no more

[1] *Id.*, p. 322.
[2] *Id.*, p. 291, citing R. V., x, 91, 2, from Muir's "Old Sanskrit Texts", v, 204.
[3] Cox, as cited p. 369 *n.*
[4] *Id.* p. 365.

room for inferring foreign influence in the growth of these myths than, as Bunsen rightly insists, there is room for tracing Christian influence in the earlier epical literature of the Teutonic tribes."[1]

The fluidity of the whole of the myth material under notice is yet further illustrated in the following sketch of Krishna's many metamorphoses;

"He is . . . . also identified with Hari or the dwarf Vishnu, a myth which carries us to that of the child Hermes as well as to the story of the limping Hephaistos. As the son of Nanda, the bull, he is Govinda, a name which gave rise in times later than those of the Mahâbhârata to the stories of his life with the cowherds and his dalliance with their wives; but in the Mahâbhârata he is already the protector of cattle, and like Herâkles slays the bull which ravaged the herds [Muir, "Sanskrit Texts", iv, 206]. His name Krishna, again, is connected with another parentage which makes him the progeny of the black hair of Hari, the dwarf Vishnu [*Ib.* 331]. But he is also Hari himself, and Hari is Narayana, 'the God who transcends all, the minutest of the minute, the vastest of the vast, the greatest of the great'. In short the interchange or contradiction is undisguised, for he is 'the soul of all, the omniscient, the all, the all-knowing, the producer of all, the God whom the Goddess Devakî bore to Vishnu'.[2]

"The character of Rudra, said to be sprung from Krishna, is not more definite. As so produced, he is Time, and is declared by his father to be the offspring of his anger. But in the character of Mahâdeva, Rudra is worshipped by Krishna, and the necessary explanation is that in so adoring him Krishna was only worshipping himself. Rudra, however, is also Narayana, and Siva the destroyer. . . . . It is the same with Râma, who is sometimes produced from the half of Vishnu's virile power, and sometimes addressed by Brahma as 'the source of being and the cause of destruction, Upendra and Mahendra, the younger and the elder Indra'.[3] . . . . This cumbrous mysticism leads us further and further from the simpler conceptions of the oldest mythology, in which Rudra is scarcely more than an epithet, applied sometimes to Agni, sometimes to Mitra, Varuna, the Asvins, or the Maruts. . . . . It was in accordance with the general course of Hindu mythology that

[1] *Id.* p. 371 *n.*

[2] *Sic* in Cox; but Muir, who is cited, has "to Vasudeva", p. 224.

[3] Muir, iv, 146, 250. So cited in Cox; but 250 should apparently be 150, where the passage runs: 'Thou art the source of being and cause of destruction, Upendra (the younger Indra), and Madhusûdana. Thou art Mahendra (the older Indra). . . . . ".

the greatness of Rudra, who is sometimes regarded as self-existent, should be obscured by that of his children."[1]

Further illustration could be given, if need were, of this interfluence of myths in the case of the three Râmas, Bala Râma, Parasu[2] Râma, and Râma Chandra, who pass for three different incarnations of Vishnu, but who were early surmised by students to be "three representatives of one person, or three different ways of relating the same history";[3] and whom M. Senart declares to be indeed mythologically one:

"In effect, there is really only one Râma. The contrary opinion of Lassen (*Ind. Alt.*, ii, 2, 503) rests on an Evhemerism which will find, I think, few adherents. But he appears to us under a triple form . . . . the popular Râma, brother of Krishna; the Brahmanic Râma, who destroys the Kshatriyas; the Kshatriya Râma, King's son and happy conqueror. The axe of the second, like the ploughshare of the first, represents the same weapon of thunder, which the hero wields against the demons."[4]

Now, Bala Râma, whom Sir William Jones[5] identified with the Greek and "Indian" Dionysos, but whom we have seen (Sec. ix) to be probably the Hercules of Megasthenes, "appears to be an ancient agricultural deity that presided over the tillage of the soil and the harvest. He is armed with a ploughshare" [Cp. Sec. ix, citing Moor] "whence his surname *Halabhrit*, 'the plough-bearer'; and his distinctive characteristic is an ungovernable passion for bacchanalian revels, inebriation, and sensual love."[6] Like each of his duplicates, he was doubtless a

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[1] Cox, pp. 365-7.

[2] According to Moor, "Parasu" means a sword; according to Balfour's *Ind. Cycl.*, a club; according to Tiele (before cited), an axe! Here, too, is trinity.

[3] Moor, "Hindu Pantheon", p. 191.

[4] *Essai*, p. 234, *n.*

[5] As. Res., ii, 132.

[6] Barth, p. 173. M. Senart writes (p. 325, *n.*): "As to his name of Bala, the analogy of Krishna would suggest that it also had originally a more specially demoniac significance, and that the form Bala is only an alteration of Vala, a Vedic personage connected by name and function with Vritra. This is indeed certain as regards the epic Bala, enemy of Indra." In the same note M. Senart draws a connexion between Rama and the Persian Râma-gastra, who is an atmospheric genie watching the "pastures" of Mithra, and who figures both as lightning and sun.

Sun-God (Râma Chandra, who represents the moon,[1] being also solar);[2] and it might conceivably have been his fortune to become the supremely popular deity instead of Krishna. He too has a Birth Festival, which Professor Weber supposes to be based on that of Krishna, which it very closely resembles; he too figures then as the Child-God; and he too is associated with the stable-myth in that Jamadagni, the father of Parasu Râma, was intrusted by Indra with the charge of the boon-granting cow, Kamadenu.[3] His old standing was the cause of his being made Krishna's twin; and at present he ranks next him in popularity.[4] "Like Krishna, Râma is a hero, an exterminator of monsters, a victorious warrior. But, idealised by the poetry of a more fastidious age, and one less affected by the myth [*i.e.*, in the Râmâyana], he is at the same time, what we cannot maintain in regard to the enigmatic son of Devakî, the finished type of submission to duty, nobility of moral character, and of chivalric generosity."[5] But Krishna in turn has his transfiguration in the Bhagavat Gîtâ. In fine, ancient India, then as now a manifold world of differing peoples and faiths, had a multitude of Sun-Gods apart from those of the priest-made Vedas, but based like these on immemorial myth; and of these Krishna, ancient as the others were ancient, is the one who, by dint of literary and sectarian manipulation, has best been able to "survive".

§ 2. It may be, however, that while the antiquity of the main material of Krishnaism is admitted, it will still be argued, as by Professor Weber, that only in comparatively late times was Krishna a deity at all, and that this alleged lateness of creation permitted of, and partly depended on, the adoption of some of the Christian legends early in our era. But it will, I think, only be necessary to state Professor Weber's position in contrast with the argument of M. Senart to make clear the soundness of the latter and the untenableness of the former.

Professor Weber seeks to trace the rise of Krishnaism by way of the chronological order of the references in the documents, taking the Vedic allusions as representing the

[1] *Id.*, p. 177.
[2] See above, Sec. v, citing Tiele, and ix, citing Moor.
[3] Moor, p. 190.
[4] Moor, p. 192.
[5] Barth, p. 176.

beginnings of the cult, the passage in the Khandogya Upanishad as pointing to a quasi-historic personage, the legends in the Mahâbhârata as a development of his story, and so on.[1] M. Senart, in answer, points first to the admitted fact that the Kansa legend was already old for Patanjali, and contends that the presence in that text of the name of Govinda sufficiently shows that the myth of the sojourn among the shepherds, which was the inseparable preparation for the slaying of the tyrant, was already ancient and popular, and that it was as the companion of shepherds and lover of the Gopîs, not as the hero of the epic, that Krishna was first deified.[2] It may be added that the antiquity of the similar myth in connexion with Cyrus is a further ground for the same conclusion, as has been shown above. M. Senart then goes on to cite, what is perhaps less important, the testimony of Alexander Polyhistor [fl. 85 B.C.] that in his day the Brahmans worshipped Hercules and Pan. There is, M. Senart argues, no other Hindu deity who could so well suit the latter title as Krishna—a contention which seems to me inconclusive in the circumstances. Might not Alexander's Pan be Siva, whom M. Barth,[3] following Lassen, identifies with the Dionysos of Megasthenes? Certainly the latter is the more plausible conjecture; but is not Dionysos fully as close a parallel to Krishna as Pan would be? In any case, though M. Senart connects his conjecture, as to Krishna being Alexander's Pan, with the rest of his argument, that works itself out independently, and will stand very well on its own merits:

"This testimony is the more important in that it leads us to carry further back the date of the legends of this order. M. Lassen, in spite of his opinions on the antiquity of the doctrine of Avataras and the cult of Krishna, seems on this point to go even further than M. Weber. In support of that opinion there is little weight in the negative argument from the silence of the ancient works which have come down to us. What idea should we have had of the date and importance of Buddhism, if we were shut up to the testimony of Brahmanic literature? We can certainly distinguish in Krishna a triple personage; it does not follow, however, that these mean simply three successive aspects of the same type, until it be determined that logically they derive and develope one from the other. Now,

[1] Treatise cited, p. 316. [2] *Essai*, p. 339. [3] As cited, p. 163.

the fact is quite the contrary: an abyss separates each one of these stages from the next, if we take them in the supposed order. How could a sacred poet, the obscure disciple of a certain Ghora, suddenly have become the national hero of an important Indian people, the bellicose performer of so many exploits, not merely marvellous, but clearly mythological? And how could this warrior, raised so high, from the epic period, in the admiration and even in the worship of Indians, be subsequently lowered to the position of the adopted child of a shepherd, the companion of shepherds, and mixed up in dubious adventures, which do not fail at times to disquiet and embarrass his devotees? It is clear that the first step at least of such an evolution could only be made under powerful sacerdotal pressure: now there exists in this connexion no sign of such a thing in the literature we possess: the cult of Krishna is not a Brahmanic but a popular cult. In fine, there is no doubt that we must reverse the statement. Krishna must have been at first the object of a secondary cult, connected especially, as it remained in the sequel, with the legends of his birth, of his infancy, and of his youth. Localised at first among the Sûrasenas and at Mathura, this cult would have sufficed to introduce into the epic legend of the Kshatriyas, fixed in that epoch under Brahmanic influence, the bellicose character in which we know him. On its part, the Brahmanic school, desirous to appropriate him, would put him in the list of its singers and masters, until the ever more powerful spread of his popularity forced it to embrace him, under the title of Avatara of Vishnu, in its new theory and in its modern systems. It must not be forgotten that the organisation of castes creates, alongside of the chronological succession, a superposition not only of social classes but of traditions and ideas which could live long side by side in a profound isolation. Thus considered, the history of the cult of Krishna resolves itself into two periods, which I would not, however, represent as necessarily and strictly successive. Krishna was at first a quite popular deity, whose worship, more or less narrowly localised, spread little by little; till at length, identified with Vishnu and admitted to the number of his incarnations, he was *ipso facto* recognised by the superior caste.

"It is possible, indeed, that Christian influences may have developed among the Indians in his connexion the Monotheistic idea and the doctrine of faith. . . . However that may be, what interests us chiefly at present is the age not so much of his cult, still less of a certain form of his cult, but of the legend of the hero, and more precisely of that part of his legend which embraces his infancy and his youth. Now, this narrative has its roots in the images of a perfectly authentic naturalism: it cannot be isolated from the various kindred

mythological series: and if we only apply, without rashness and without prejudice, the customary methods of mythological analysis, it leads us obviously to more ancient conceptions; and the homogeneity which is exhibited by the whole demonstrates the normal and consequent development of all the parts. Several precise testimonies, independent of any argument borrowed from resemblances, attest the existence of essential elements of the legend at an epoch when there can be no question of those influences which have been conjectured; and these influences finally rest on a very limited number of very inconclusive facts, which, besides, only touch entirely secondary details."

This argument has been criticised by Professor Weber in a review of M. Senart's essay in which, while differing from his conclusions, he speaks in high terms of his French opponent's scholarship and ability. With his invariable candor, the Professor, remarking that the theory of Krishna's herdsmanship being derived from the cloud-cows of the Vedas is new to him,[1] admits that in itself it is very plausible. But, he goes on,

"Only in the *latest* texts do we find this Gopî idyl: the older records *know nothing of it*, but recognise Krishna only as assiduous pupil or brave hero. Recently, indeed, passages have been made known from the Mahâbhâshya which set forth Krishna's relation to Kansa; even further, from Panini, his being evidently worshipped as Vasudeva; and the existence of his epithet *Kesava*; . . . . but, on the one hand, the herdsman idyl is there awanting; . . . . and on the other hand, in view of the doubts which Burnell and Böhtlingk have expressed, in connection with my inquiry, as to the value of the evidence for Patanjali's date given by the words and citations in the Mahâbhâshya, Senart's assumption that that work dates 'from before the Christian era' is very questionable. The testimony of Alexander Polyhistor that the Brahmans worshipped a Hercules and a Pan, is again too vague to permit of its being founded on in this matter." [2]

The force of the last objection I have admitted; and as to the date of Patanjali, of which Professor Weber had seemed formerly[3] to take Professor Bhandarkar's view (shared by both Senart and Barth), it can only be said that if the "doubts" are ever strengthened, that part of

[1] Though, as we have seen, the stealing and herding of cows has frequently such a significance in Greek myths.

[2] *Indische Streifen*, iii, 429.

[3] See above, sec. vii.

our evidences will have to be reconsidered; though Professor Weber and the doubters will also have to face and explain the fact of the ancient currency of the Cyrus myth on the Iranian side. In any case Patanjali would have to be dated *very* late to countervail the implied antiquity of the phrases he quotes. But as regards the Professor's objection that the Gopî idyl is not mentioned in the oldest documentary references to Krishna, the reader will at once see that it is no answer to M. Senart, whose argument is that the Gopî idyl is part of an immemorial popular myth, originally current outside the Brahmanic sphere. Nor does the Professor in any way meet M. Senart's refutation of his own development theory, or answer the questions as to how (1) the deity could be developed out of the student of the Upanishad, and how (2) the warrior hero of the epic could be lowered from that status to the position of the adopted son of a shepherd and companion of shepherds, given to dubious adventures, unless there were an old myth to that effect[1]? These questions, I make bold to say, are unanswerable. We are left to the irresistible conclusion that the myths of Krishna's birth and youth are not only pre-Christian but pre-historic.

§ 3. But yet one more reinforcement of the strongest kind is given to the whole argument by M. Senart's demonstration[2] of the derivation of a large part of the Buddha myth from that of Krishna, or from pre-Krishnaite sources. It is needless here to give at length the details, which include such items as the breaking of Siva's bow by Kama, the God of Love, of Kansa's by Krishna, and of various bows by Siddartha (Buddha)[3]; the exploit against the elephant, similarly common to the three personages[4]; the parallel between the births of Buddha and Krishna[5]; their early life of pleasure,[6] and their descent from "enemies of the Gods".[7] There is, in fine, a "close relationship" between the Buddhist and the Krishnaite legends,[8] as we have partly seen above.

"In nearly all the variations of this legendary theme, one

[1] There are in the Mahâbhârata allusions which show the herdsman characteristics to have been associated in the hero. See Senart, p. 340, *n*.

[2] *Essai*, p. 297 ff. [3] *Id.* p. 302. [4] *Id.* p. 303.
[5] *Id.* p. 312. [6] *Id.* p. 305. [7] *Id.* p. 315.
[8] *Id.* p. 326.

point remains fixed and constant: it is among shepherds that the hero is exiled; and it is impossible to separate from the series either the *vraja* or the herdsmen and herdswomen who surround the youth of Krishna. And this trait is found in the story of Sakya."[1]

And while it is impossible to say with certainty how and whence the Buddhist adaptations were made, it is frequently found here, as in the Christian parallels, that the Krishnaite form of a given story is by far the more natural. The exploit against the elephant evidently "belonged to the Krishnaite legend before being introduced into the life of Sakya [Buddha]: it is infinitely better motived in the former than in the latter". Again, the genealogy of Buddha is in large part a variant on that of Râma. If, then, the theory of imitation from Christian legends were sound, we should have to hold either (*a*) that Buddhism, which so extensively influenced Christianity, did not even borrow from Christianity direct, but did it at second-hand through Krishnaism, or (*b*) that Krishnaism borrowed from Buddhism legends which the Buddhists had already assimilated from the Christians. I think we have now seen reason enough to decide that such theories are impossible. It remains to investigate the theory of doctrinal as distinct from mythical assimilations.

XVIII.

§ 1. Professor Weber has more than once advanced the opinion that, in addition to the mythical narratives which we have discussed in the foregoing sections, Krishnaism borrowed from Christianity certain of its leading doctrines, in particular its insistence on the need and value of "faith", and its monotheistic view of its deity. One of his earlier statements of this opinion has been already cited (Sec. x); and he has maintained it to the last. In the "Birth Festival" treatise, after enumerating the alleged myth-imitations, he continues:

"Their Christian origin is as little to be doubted as the conclusion [*Ind. Studien*, i, 423] that 'in general the later exclusively monotheistic tendency of the Indian sects who worship a particu-

[1] *Essai*, p. 319.

lar personal God, pray for his favor, and trust in him (*bhakti* and *sraddha*), was influenced by the acquaintance made by the Indians with the corresponding teaching of Christianity'; or, in the words of Wilson (quoted in Mrs. Speir's 'Life in Ancient India', p. 434: cp. my *Abh. über die Râmatâp. Up.*, p. 277, 360), 'that the remodelling of the ancient Hindu systems into popular forms, and in particular the vital importance of faith, were directly [*sic*] influenced by the diffusion of the Christian religion'."[1]

Here, it will be seen, Professor Weber quotes Wilson at secondhand from Mrs. Speir, who cited an Indian magazine. She made the blunder of writing "directly" for "indirectly"; but she states fairly enough that Wilson only "hints" his opinion; and this the Professor overlooks, though doubtless he would have given Wilson's passage more fully if he had been able to lay his hands on it. Its effect is so different when quoted in full that I think it well so to transcribe it:

"It is impossible to avoid noticing in the double doctrine of the Gîtâ an analogy to the double doctrine of the early Christian Church, and the same question as to the merits of contemplative and practical religion engendered many differences of opinion and observance in the first ages of Christianity. These discussions, it is true, grew out of the admixture of the Platonic philosophical notions with the lessons of Christianity, *and had long pervaded the east before the commencement of our era*; it would not follow, therefore, that the divisions of the Christian Church originated the doctrine of the Hindus, and there is *no reason to doubt that in all essential respects the Hindu schools are of a much earlier date*: at the same time it is *not at all unlikely* that the speculations of those schools were reagitated and remodified in the general stimulus which Christianity *seems* to have given to metaphysical inquiry; and it is *not impossible* that the attempts to model the ancient systems into a popular form, by engrafting on them, in particular, the vital importance of faith, were *indirectly* influenced by the diffusion of the Christian religion. *It is highly desirable that this subject should be further investigated.*"[2]

This, it will be seen, is a very different deliverance from Weber's, and also from what Wilson is made to say in the incomplete and inaccurate quotation of his words. Pro-

[1] Treatise cited, p. 339.

[2] H. H. Wilson, in review of Schlegel's trans. of the Bhâgavat Gîtâ, *Orient. Quart. Rev.*, Calcutta, vol. iii; in Works, v, pp. 156–7.

fessor Weber, without bringing forward any important new facts, makes a positive assertion where Wilson expressed himself very cautiously and doubtfully, and does not meet (having apparently not seen) Wilson's propositions as to the antiquity in India of the general pantheistic doctrine which prevailed in the East before Christianity.[1]

Before we come to a decision on the point at issue, it may be well to see what it was exactly that Wilson understood by the doctrine of faith, which he thought *might possibly* be *indirectly* influenced by Christianity, and which Weber holds to be without doubt entirely derived thence. In his Oxford lectures he declares that in the Purânas the doctrine of the sufficiency of faith is

"carried to the very utmost abuse of which it is susceptible. Entire dependency on Krishna, or any other favorite deity, not only obviates the necessity of virtue, but it sanctifies vice. Conduct is wholly immaterial. It matters not how atrocious a sinner a man may be, if he paints his face, his breast, his arms, with certain sectarial marks, or, which is better, if he brands his skin permanently with them with a hot iron stamp; if he is constantly chanting hymns in honor of Vishnu; or, what is eqnally efficacious, if he spends hours in the simple reiteration of his name or names; if he die with the word Hari or Râma or Krishna on his lips, and the thought of him in his mind, he may have lived a monster of iniquity—he is certain of heaven."[2]

Now, it cannot be denied that all this bears a very close resemblance to the practical applications of the Christian doctrine of faith in European history, and that that is of all Christian doctrines the one which may with most plausi-

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[1] Professor Weber's misunderstanding as to Wilson's view on *bhakti* seems to have become a fixed idea. In a later letter to Dr. John Muir on the subject, he speaks yet again of "Wilson's theory that the *bhakti* of the later Hindu sects is essentially a Christian doctrine". Wilson, as we have seen, had no such opinion. Dr. Muir might well write: "I am not aware in which, if in any, of his writings Professor Wilson may have expressed the opinion that the Indian tenet of *bhakti* is essentially Christian. I find no express statement to this effect in his 'Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus', though he there says that 'the doctrine of the efficacy of *bhakti* seems to have been an important innovation upon the primitive system of the Hindu religion'" (Art. in *Indian Antiquary*, March, 1875, vol. iv, p. 79).

[2] 'Two Lectures on the Religious Practices . . . . of the Hindus," Oxford, 1840, p. 31,="Works", ii, 75. See also Works, i, 368.

bility be held to have originated, in Europe, with the New Testament. If our object were merely to discredit that religion, we might very readily allow the claim that it gave rise to such a teaching alike in Europe and Asia; and indeed, if there had been no traces of it in India before the Purânas, it would be difficult to gainsay the Christian hypothesis. An impartial inquiry, however, reveals that the doctrine of salvation by faith is already fully laid down in the Bhâgavat Gîtâ; and the Christian hypothesis involves the conclusion that that famous document is a patchwork of Christian teaching. Now, there are decisive reasons for rejecting such a view.

§ 2. Its most confident and systematic expositor is Dr. F. Lorinser, a German translator of the Gîtâ, whose position is that "the author [of the Gîtâ] knew the New Testament writings, which, so far as he thought fit, he used, and of which he pieced into his work many passages (if not textually, then following the sense and adapting it to his Indian fashion of composition), though these facts have hitherto not been observed or pointed out by anyone".[1] This startling proposition, which is nominally supported by citation of the general opinions of Professor Weber, rests deductively on early Christian statements as to the introduction of Christianity into "India", and inductively on a number of parallels between the New Testament and the Gîtâ. The statements in question are those of Eusebius as to the mission of Pantænus, and of Chrysostom as to an "Indian" translation of the Gospels or other Christian writings. The narrative of Eusebius is as follows:

"The *tradition* is, that this philosopher was then in great eminence . . . . He is said to have displayed such ardour and so zealous a disposition, respecting the divine word, that he was constituted a *herald* of the Gospel to the nations of the East, and advanced even as far as India. There were *even there* yet many evangelists of the word, who were ardently striving to employ their inspired zeal after the apostolic example, to increase and build up the divine word. *Of these Pantœnus is said to have been one, and to have come as far as the Indies.* And

[1] *Die Bhagavad-Gita, übersetzt und erläutert von* Dr. F. Lorinser, Breslau, 1869, p. 272. (The argumentative appendix has, I believe, been translated in part in the *Indian Antiquary*, October, 1873, vol. i, pp. 283—296.)

the report is that he there found his own arrival anticipated by some who were acquainted with the Gospel of Matthew, to whom Bartholomew, one of the apostles, had preached, and had left them the Gospel of Matthew in the Hebrew, which was also preserved until this time. Pantænus, after many praiseworthy deeds, was finally at the head of the Alexandrian school." [1]

The statement of Chrysostom, again, is that "the Syrians, and the Egyptians, and the Indians, and the Persians, and the Ethiopians, and innumerable (*μυρία*) other peoples were taught, though barbarians, to be philosophers, by his [John's] teachings translated into their own language".[2]

On this latter record Dr. Lorinser comments :—

"It may be argued that the significance of this testimony is weakened by the addition 'and innumerable other peoples'. This apprehension, however, disappears when we consider that all the translations here specified by name, with the single exception of the *Indian*, are both heard of otherwise and still in existence. In any case, Chrysostom would not here have explicitly named the Indians if he had not had positive knowledge of an existing translation in their language. Chrysostom died in the year 407 A.C. The Indian translation of which he had knowledge must have existed *at least* a hundred years earlier, for the knowledge of it to reach him in those days. Apparently, however, Pantænus, the teacher of Clemens Alexandrinus, of whom we know that he had himself been in India, had already brought this knowledge to the West. The origin of this translation may thus possibly go back to the first or second century after Christ." [3]

The most astonishing point about this astonishing argument is that Dr. Lorinser seems entirely unaware that the names "India" and "Indians" were frequently applied by ancient writers to countries and peoples other than India proper. Yet not only is this general fact notorious,[4] but

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[1] "Eccles. Hist.", v, 10 (Bohn trans.).

[2] Comm. in S. Joann., Hom. ii (i), 2, in Cap. i, v. 1 (Migne, *Ser. Gr.* lix, 32).

[3] Work cited, pp. 268-9.

[4] "After the time of Herodotus the name India was applied to all lands in the south-western world, to east Persia and south Arabia, to Ethiopia, Egypt, and Lybia, in short, to all dark-skinned peoples, who in Homer's time, as Ethiopians, were allotted the whole horizon (*Lichtrand*) of the South. Virgil and others signify by India just the East; but most commonly it stands for southern Arabia and Ethiopia." (Von Bohlen, *Das alte Indien*, i, 9-10, citing Virg. *Æn.*

it has been made the occasion of much dispute as to what country it was that Pantænus visited, even orthodox opinion finally coming round to the view that it was not India at all. Mosheim wrote that most of the learned had held it to be Eastern India proper, an opinion countenanced by the statement of Jerome that Pantænus was sent *apud Brachmanas*.[1] But the name Brachman was, as he further pointed out, used as loosely by the ancients as that of India; and the evidence of Jerome further varies from that of Eusebius in stating[2] that the "Indians" had sent delegates to Alexandria asking for a Christian instructor, and that Bishop Demetrius sent Pantænus. That Indian Brahmans should have sent such a deputation is simply inconceivable. Vales, Holstein, and others accordingly surmised that the mission was to Ethiopia or Abysinnia, which was constantly called India by the ancients. Mosheim, rationally arguing that the Hebrew translation of Matthew must have been used by Jews, decided that the delegates came from a Jewish-Christian colony, which he located in Arabia Felix, because he held that to have been the scene of Bartholomew's "Indian" labors.[3] It matters little which view we take here, so long as we recognise the absurdity of the view that the locality was India. Indeed, even if the "Indies" of Eusebius had meant India, the testimony is on the face of it a mere tradition.

The same arguments, it need hardly be said, dispose of the testimony of Chrysostom, who unquestionably alluded to some of the many peoples of Western Asia or Africa commonly dubbed Indians. If further disproof of

viii, 705; *Georg.* ii, 116, 172; Diodor., iii. 31; Lucan, ix, 517; Fabric., *Cod. Apoc. N. T.* p. 669; Beausobre, *Hist. du Manichæisme*, i, 23, 40, 404; ii, 129.) Von Bohlen states that the name India first appears among the Greeks in Æschylus, *Supplic.* 282. There the reference is clearly not to India proper, the words running: "I hear that the wandering Indians ride on pannier-packed camels fleet as steeds, in their land bordering on the Ethiopians".

[1] *Epist.* 83, quoted by Mosheim.

[2] *Catal. Scriptor. Ecclesiast.* c. 36, cited by Mosheim.

[3] "Commentaries on the affairs of the Christians", Vidal's trans. ii, 6–8, *note*, (citing Tillemont, *In Vit. Barthol.* in *Mem. Hist. Eccles.* i, 1. 60-1). In the original, pp. 205-7. See also Murdock's note in his trans. of Mosheim's History, Cent. ii, part i, c. i, § 3. Compare the admissions of Gieseler ("Compendium," i, 79, 121, *notes*), who thinks Thomas and Bartholomew probably only went to Yemen.

Dr. Lorinser's extravagant assumption be needed, it lies in the fact that even Tertullian, in his reckless and worthless catalogue of the nations that had embraced Christianity, a list which includes Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the people of "Mesopotamia, Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia and Pamphylia"—the whole Pentecostal list—does not say a word of India;[1] and that Irenæus in his allegation as to the spread of the faith does not do so either.[2] In any case, neither Chrysostom nor Eusebius, nor yet Jerome, pretends that the "Indians" had a complete translation of the books of the New Testament; and nothing less than a complete translation in an Indian tongue is wanted for Dr. Lorinser's argument, as we shall see when we examine his "parallel passages". He admits, in a piquant passage, that it is impossible to say in what dialect the translation was made, whether in one of those spoken by the people or in Sanskrit, then as now only known to the Brahmans. Dr. Lorinser observes that it is all one (*gleichgültig*) to him. I do not doubt it!

§ 3. An argument for the derivation of the teaching in the Bhagavat Gîtâ from the New Testament has the advantage, to begin with, involved in the difficulty of fixing the time of the composition of the Gîtâ from either internal or external evidence. There can be no doubt that, like so many other Hindu writings, it was formerly dated much too early. Ostensibly an episode in the great epic, the Mahâbhârata, it stands out from the rest of that huge poem as a specifically theological treatise, cast in the form of a dialogue which is represented as taking place between Krishna and the warrior Arjuna on the eve of a great battle. I may say at once that I cannot regard it as having been composed at the same time as the portion of the poem in which it is inserted. Mr. K. T. Telang, the able Hindu scholar who has translated it for the "Sacred Books of the East" series,[3] and who argues persuasively for its antiquity, confessedly holds "not without diffidence"—indeed, very doubtfully—to the view that it is a genuine "portion of the original Mahâbhârata".[4]

[1] *Adversus Judæos*, c. 7. [2] *Adv. Hæreses*, c. 10.

[3] Vol. viii, 1882.

[4] Introd., pp. 2, 5, 6. In the introduction to his earlier translation of the Bhagavat Gîtâ in blank verse (Bombay, 1875), Mr. Telang took up a stronger position; but even there he declared: "I own I

Where he is diffident, the rest of us, I fear, must be disbelieving. There is much force in Mr. Telang's contention that the Gîtâ belongs to a period before that of the system-makers; indeed the flat contradiction, to which he alludes,[1] between Krishna's declarations on the one hand that to him "none is hateful, none dear",[2] and on the other hand that a whole series of doers of good are "dear" to him[3]—this even raises a doubt as to the entire homogeneity of the document. But it is one thing to reckon the Gîtâ ancient, and another to regard it as a portion of the "original Mahâbhârata". It is not easily to be believed that a piece of writing in which Krishna is not only represented as the Supreme Deity but pantheistically treated, can belong originally to the epic in which he is a heroic demi-god. It must surely belong to the period of his Brahmanic supremacy.

Where *that* period begins, however, it is still impossible to say with any approach to precision; and, as Professor Weber remarks, Dr. Lorinser's thesis is thus far unhampered by any effective objections from Hindu chronology. It must, however, stand criticism on its own merits, and we have seen how abjectly it breaks down in respect of the patristic testimony to the existence of an "Indian" mission, and an "Indian" translation of part of the New Testament, in the first Christian centuries. It is morally certain that no such translation existed, even of the Gospels, not to speak of the entire canon, which Dr. Lorinser strangely seems to think is covered by his quotation from Chrysostom. His argument from history being thus annihilated, it remains to be seen whether he succeeds any better in his argument from resemblance. It is not, I think, difficult to show that, even if the Gîtâ were composed within the Christian era, it really owes nothing to Christianity.

The derivation of the Gîtâ's teaching from the Christian Scriptures Dr. Lorinser claims to prove by about one

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find it quite impossible to satisfy myself that there are more than a very few facts in the history of Sanskrit literature which we are entitled to speak of as 'historically certain'" (p. vii). The earlier essay, however, contains a very able and complete refutation of Dr. Lorinser's arguments, well worthy the attention of those who are disposed for a further investigation of the subject.

[1] P. 12. [2] Gîtâ, ix, 29. [3] *Id.*, xii.

hundred parallel passages, in which Gîtâ sentences are matched by texts selected from nearly all the New Testament books. He divides them into three classes: (1) passages in which, with differences of expression, the sense coincides; (2) passages in which a characteristic expression of the New Testament appears with a different application; and (3) passages in which expression and meaning coincide. The nature of these "coincidences" can be best set forth by a simple selection of about a score of them. I have made this quite impartially, taking the majority consecutively as they happen to stand at the heads of the sections, and picking out the remainder because of their comparative importance. It would be easy to make a selection which would put Dr. Lorinser's case in a much worse light.

Bhagavat Gita.	New Testament.
(First Order.)	
The deluded man who, restraining the organs of action, continues to think in his mind about objects of sense, is called a hypocrite.[1] iii, 6.	I say unto you that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Matt. v, 28.
But those who carp at my opinion and do not act upon it, know them to be devoid of discrimination, deluded as regards all knowledge, and ruined. iii, 32.	A man that is heretical [after a first and second admonition] refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned. Titus, iii, 10–11.
Every sense has its affections and its aversions towards its objects fixed. One should not become subject to them, for they are one's opponents. iii, 34.	Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof. Romans, vi, 12. Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, etc. *Id.* viii, 7.
[Arjuna speaks]: Later is your [Krishna's] birth; the birth of the sun is prior. How then shall I understand that you declared (this) first? [Krishna answers]: I have	The Jews therefore said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? John, viii, 57.
	I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye [*i.e.*, the

[1] I have followed throughout the prose translation of Mr. Telang; and I have occasionally given in brackets parts of a passage elided by Dr. Lorinser as not bearing on his point. The context clearly ought to be kept in view.

passed through many births, O Arjuna! and you also. I know them all, but you, ... O terror of your foes, do not know them. iv, 4.

I am born age after age, for the protection of the good, and for the destruction of evil-doers and the establishment of piety. iv, 8.

He who is ignorant and devoid of faith, and whose self is full of misgivings, is ruined. iv, 40.

To me none is hateful, none dear. ix, 29.

Jews] know not whence I came, or whither I go. *Id.*, 14.

To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. John, xviii, 37. The devil sinneth from the beginning. 1 John, iii, 8.

He that believeth [and is baptised] shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. Mark, xvi, 16.

There is no respect of persons with God. Rom. ii, 11.

(Second Order.)

For should I at any time not engage without sloth in action, [men would follow in my path from all sides, O son of Pritha!] *If I did not perform actions*, these worlds would be destroyed. I should be the cause of caste interminglings. I should be ruining these people. iii, 23–4.

Even those men who *always act on this opinion of mine* full of faith, *and without carping* [" *die lästern nicht* " in Lorinser] are released from all actions. iii, 31.

. . . . me . . . . *the goal* [" *der Weg* " in Lorinser[1]] than which there is nothing higher. vii. 18.

My Father *worketh even until now, and I work.* John v, 17. [*As against passage in brackets*]: If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross. Matt. xvi, 24.

If a man *keep my word* [he shall never see death]. John, viii, 51.

. . . . that the word of God *be not blasphemed.* Titus, ii, 5. [*Compare the preceding sentences of the epistle.*]

I am *the way*. . . . . No one cometh unto the Father, but by me. John, xiv, 6.

[1] Dr. John Muir, than whom there is no higher authority in this country, rejects Dr. Lorinser's translation of " way " and anticipates Telang's :—" Here, as in many other passages of the Indian writings, [the word] certainly signifies 'the place reached by going', 'resort', 'refuge'." *Indian Antiquary*, March, 1875 (vol. iv), p. 80. To the same effect, Professor Tiele, in *Theolog. Tijdschr.*, 1877, p. 75 *n.*

(*Third Order.*)

To the man of knowledge I am dear above all things, and he is dear to me. vii, 17.

I am not manifest to all. vii, 26.

It [*i.e.* divine knowledge] is to be apprehended directly, and is easy to practise. ix, 2.

I am [the father of this universe, the mother, the creator, the grandsire, the thing to be known, the means of sanctification, the syllable Om (= past, present, and future) the *Rik*, Saman, and Yajus also] *the goal*, [the sustainer, the lord, the supervisor, the residence, the asylum, the friend,] the source and that in which it merges, [the support, the receptacle, and the inexhaustible seed]. I cause heat, and I send forth and stop showers. [I am immortality, and also death; and I, O Arjuna! am that which is and that which is not.] ix, 18, 19.

[That devotee who worships me abiding in all beings, holding that all is one,] lives in me, however he may be living. vi. 30.

But those who worship me with devotion (dwell) in me, and I too in them. ix, 29.[1]

He [that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that] loveth me . . . . and I will love him. John, xiv, 21.

No man hath seen God at any time. John, i, 18.

Whom no man hath seen, nor can see. 1 Tim. vi, 18.

My yoke is easy, and my burden light. Matt. xi, 30.

I am the way [and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father but by me]. John, xiv, 6.

I am the first and the last, [and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades]. Rev. i, 17-18.

He maketh his sun to rise [on the evil and the good], and *sendeth rain* [on the just and the unjust]. Matt. v, 45.

[As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so] he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me. John, vi, 57.

I in them, and they in me [that they may be perfected into one]. John, xvii, 23.

[1] As to the passage "They who devoutly worship me are in me, and I in them", Dr. Muir writes: "In the Rig Veda some passages occur which in part convey the same or a similar idea. Thus in ii, 11, 12, it is said: 'O Indra, we sages have been in thee'; and in x, 142, 1: 'This worshipper, O Agni, hath been in thee: O son of strength, he hath no other kinship'; and in viii, 47, 8: 'We, O Gods, are in you as if fighting in coats of mail. . . . . And in viii,

I am the origin of all, and all moves on through me. x, 8.	For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. Rom. xi, 36.
I am the beginning, and the middle and the end also of all beings. x, 20.	I am the first and the last.[1] Rev. i, 17.

The first comment that must occur to every instructed reader on perusing these and the other "parallels" advanced by Dr. Lorinser, is that on the one hand the parallels are very frequently such as could be made by the dozen between bodies of literature which have unquestionably never been brought in contact, so strained and far-fetched are they, and that on the other they are discounted by quite as striking parallels between New Testament texts and pre-Christian pagan writings. Take a few of the more notable of these latter parallels, in the order in which the New Testament passages occur above.

He who means to do an injury has already done it. SENECA, *De Irâ*, i, 3.

Though you may take care of her body, the [coerced wife's] mind is adulterous, nor can she be preserved, unless she is willing. OVID, *Amor.*, iii, 4, 5.

Not only is he who does evil bad, but also he who thinks to do evil. ÆLIAN, *Var. Hist.*, xiv, 28.

In every man there are two parts: the better and superior part, which rules, and the worse and inferior part, which serves, and the ruler is always to be preferred to the servant. PLATO, *Laws*, B. v (Jowett's tr., v, 298).

[In B. iv of the *Laws* (Jowett, v, 288-9) is a long sentence declaring that the contemner of right conduct is "deserted by God" and in the end "is utterly destroyed, and his family and city with him".]

The unruly passions of anger and desire are contrary and inimical to the reason. CICERO, *Tusculan Questions*, iv, 5.

I [Cyrus] am persuaded I am born by divine providence to undertake this work. HERODOTUS, i, 126.

The Muses . . . . whom Mnemosyne . . . . bare, to be a

81, 32, the worshipper says to Indra, 'thou art ours, and we thine'." (*Ind. Ant.*, as cited, p. 80).

[1] Dr. Lorinser also brackets the Christian "I am the Alpha and the Omega" with the Gîtâ "I am A among the letters" (x. 33). But Mr. Telang points out (B. G. trans. in verse, Introd. p. lv) that the Indian writer merely takes A as the principal letter. Note that the Deity is already "the first and the last" in Isaiah (so-called):—xli, 4; xliii, 10; xlviii, 12. Why should not the Brahmans have studied the prophets?

means of oblivion of ills, and a rest from cares. HESIOD, *Theogony*, 52-5.

The Gods look with just eyes on mortals. OVID, *Metamorph.* xiii, 70.

God is verily the savior of all, and the producer of things, in whatever way they happen in the world. ARISTOTLE, *De Mundo*, 6.

Zeus, cause of all, doer of all . . . . What can be done by mortals without Zeus? ÆSCHYLUS, *Agam.* 1461—5 (1484—8).

All things are full of Jove: he cherishes the earth; my songs are his care. VERGIL, *Eclogue* iii, 60.

The temperate man is the friend of God, for he is like to him. PLATO, *Laws*, B. iv (Jowett's tr. v, 289.)

Not to every one doth Apollo manifest himself, but only to the good. CALLIMACHUS, *Hymn to Apollo.*

It is enough for God that he be worshipped and loved. SENECA, *Epist.* xlvii, 18. Cp. xcv, 50.

God, seeing all things, himself unseen. PHILEMON, *Frag.*

God, holding in his hand the beginning, middle, and end, of all that is. PLATO, *Laws*, B. iv. (Jowett, v, 288).

Zeus was, Zeus is, Zeus shall be. *Ancient Song*, in PAUSANIAS, x, 12.

God comes to men: nay, what is closer, he comes into them. SENECA, *Epistle* 73.

God is within you. EPICTETUS, *Dissert.* i, 14, 14.

Pythagoras thought that there was a soul mingling with and pervading all things. CICERO, *De Natura Deorum*, i, 11.

Such parallels as these, I repeat, could be multiplied to any extent from the Greek and Latin classics alone; while the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" furnishes many more. But is it worth while to heap up the disproof of a thesis so manifestly idle, so nearly childish? It is difficult to understand how a scholar, knowing the facts, can hope to prove such a proposition by such evidence, much more, how he can bring himself to believe in his own case. More than half the resemblances are such as could be manufactured by the dozen between any two books dealing with similar questions. On Dr. Lorinser's principle, Jesus and his followers were indebted to pagans for very much of their ethical teaching—as indeed they were unquestionably indebted for a good many of their theological ideas, not to speak of the narrative myths. But surely a very small endowment of common sense, to say nothing of scholarship, suffices to make it clear that certain commonplaces of ethics as well as of theology are equally inevitable

conclusions in all religious systems that rise above savagery.[1] Four hundred years before Jesus, Plato (*Laws*, v) declared that it was very difficult for the rich to be good: does anyone believe that Jesus or any other Jew needed Plato's help to reach the same notion? Nay, does any one even doubt that such a close coincidence as the comparison of the human soul to a team of horses in the Katha Upanishad and Plato's *Phaedrus*, pointed out to Dr. Lorinser by Professor Windisch,[2] might not be quite independent of borrowing?

If all this were not clear enough *a priori*, it is sufficiently obvious from the context of most of the passages quoted from the Gîtâ, as well as from the general drift of its exposition, that the Hindu system is immeasurably removed from the Christian in its whole theosophical inspiration. We are asked to believe that Brahmans expounding a highly developed pantheism went assiduously to the (unattainable) New Testament for the wording of a number of their propositions, pantheistic and other, while assimilating absolutely nothing of distinctively Christian doctrine; choosing to borrow from the Christians their expressions of doctrines which had been in the world for centuries, including some which lay at the root of Buddhism—as that of the religious yoke being easy—though utterly rejecting the Christian doctrine of atonement and blood sacrifice and the Christian claim as a whole. Such a position is only possible to a mesmerised believer,[3] and it is incredible that it can ever

[1] In Dr. John Muir's valuable little pamphlet "Religious and Moral Sentiments freely translated from Indian Writers" (published in Thomas Scott's series) will be found a number of extracts from the Mahâbhârata and other Sanskrit works, which, on the Christian theory, must have been borrowed from the Gospels. Thus in the epic (v, 1270) we have: "The Gods regard with delight the man who . . . . when struck does not strike again". If this be Christian (it is at least as old as Plato: see the *Gorgias*) whence came this: "The good, when they promote the welfare of others, expect no reciprocity"? (iii, 16796). It is plainly as native to the Indian poet as is the "Golden Rule", thus stated: "Let no man do to another that which would be repugnant to himself; this is the sum of righteousness; the rest is according to inclination". But Christians are kept carefully in ignorance of the fact that the "Golden Rule" is common to all literatures, and was an ancient saw in China before Jesus was born.

[2] Cited by Dr. Muir in *Ind. Ant.* as last cited, p. 78.

[3] It appears from Dr. Lorinser's notes (p. 82) that he thinks the

have any scientific acceptance. Even were ancient India in doctrinal communication with Christendom at the time in question, which we have seen it was not, it lies on the face of the case that the Brahmanic theosophy was already elaborated out of all comparison with the Christian. It had reached systematic (even if inconsistent) pantheism while Christianity was but vaguely absorbent of the pantheism around it. The law of religious development in this regard is simple. A crude and *naïf* system, like the Christism of the second Gospel and the earlier form of the first, borrows inevitably from the more highly evolved systems with which it comes socially in contact, absorbing myth and mystery and dogma till it becomes as sophisticated as they. It then becomes capable in turn of dominating primitive systems, as Christianity supplanted those of northern Europe. But not even at the height of its influence, much less in the second century, was Christianity capable of dominating Hindu Brahmanism, with its ingrained pantheism and its mass of myth and ritual, sanctioned in whole or in part by documents of the most venerable antiquity. Be the Gîtâ pre-Christian or post-Christian, it is unmixedly Hindu. Dr. Lorinser's thesis is a chimæra.

§4. When it is thus seen that all the arguments to prove imitation of the Gospels in the Bhagavat Gîtâ are baseless, it is hardly necessary to deal at any length with Professor Weber's favorite general argument as to the necessary derivation of the doctrines of *bhakti* and *sraddhâ* from Christianity. The very proposition betrays some of the "judicial blindness" labored under by Dr. Lorinser. It has never occurred to either theorist to ask how the doctrine of salvation by faith came to be developed in Christism, or whether the same religious tendencies could not give rise to the same phænomenon in similar social conditions elsewhere. I cannot burden this already overlengthy treatise with an examination of the development of the Christian doctrine of faith from Judaic germs. It must suffice to say that the principle is already clearly indicated in the prophets;[1] that faith in divine protection

author of the Gîtâ may have profited by a study of the Christian fathers, as Clemens Alexandrinus and Athenagoras! He further implies that the Hindu had read the book of *Wisdom* in the Septuagint!

[1] Micah, iii, 11; Isa., xxvi, 3; l, 7–10; Jer. vii, 14; Nahum, i, 7; Zeph. iii, 12; Psalms, *passim*.

is expressed in the early documents of other Eastern systems; and that the tendency to believe in the all-sufficiency of devotion, and the needlessness of personal merit, is noted by Plato (to name no other), and is in some degree really an inevitable phase of all systems at some stages. It found special development under Christism in a decaying society, in which the spirit of subjection had eaten away the better part of all self-reliance; and just such a state of things can be seen to have existed in many parts of India from the earliest historic times. It would be small credit to Christianity if it *were* responsible for the introduction into India of a doctrine so profoundly immoral in principle, so demoralising in practice; but as it happens, the historic facts discountenance the hypothesis. For though we cannot trace all the stages by which the doctrine of faith reached its full development, we do know that the germs of it lie in the Veda. Take first the testimony of Dr. John Muir:

"Dr. Lorinser considers (p. 56) that two Sanskrit words denoting faithful and reverential religious devotion (*sraddhâ* and *bhakti*), which often occur in the Bhagavad Gîtâ, do not convey original Indian conceptions, but are borrowed from Christianity. This may or may not be true of *bhakti*; but *sraddhâ* (together with its cognates, participial and verbal) is found even in the hymns of the Rig Veda in the sense of belief in the existence and action of a deity, at least, if not also of devotion to his service. In pp. 103 ff. of the fifth volume of my "Original Sanskrit Texts" a number of passages are cited and translated in which the word occurs, together with a great variety of other expressions in which the worshipper's trust in, and affectionate regard for, the God Indra are indicated. He is called a friend and brother; his friendship and guidance are said to be sweet; he is spoken of as a father and the most fatherly of fathers, and as being both a father and a mother; he is the helper of the poor, and has a love for mortals."[1]

These remarks are endorsed by Mr. Telang, who cites other Vedic passages;[2] and again by Professor Tiele:—

"The opinion that not only did Christian legends find an entry among the Indian sects of later times, but that even peculiarly Christian ideas exercised an influence on their dogmatics or philo-

[1] *Indian Antiquary*, iv, 81. Also in Dr. Muir's pamphlet "Relig. and Moral Sentiments", as cited, p. vi.

[2] Trans. of B. G. in verse, introd. p. lxxxii.

sophy, that is to say, that the Hindus acquired from the Christians their high veneration for piety or devotion, *bhakti*, and faith, *sraddhâ*—as is contended by Weber (*Indische Studien*, 1850; i, 423), and after him by Nève (*Des Eléments Etrangers du Mythe et du Culte de Krichna*, Paris, 1876, p. 35)—seems to me unjustified. Already in the Rig Veda there is frequent mention of faith (*sraddhâ*) in the same sense as is given to that word later; and although we cannot speak actually of *bhakti*, which there as yet only means 'division' or 'apportionment', yet this has already in very old sources the sense of 'consecration', (*toewijding*), 'fidelity' (*trouw*), 'love resting on belief' (*op geloof rustende liefde*)."[1]

We have already seen that the idea of the God entering into his worshippers existed in the Veda (as it notoriously did among the ancient Greeks), though that too was held by Dr. Lorinser to be of Christian derivation; and the one rebuttal reinforces the other. We have also seen how completely Professor Weber was mistaken as to the opinion of Wilson. It only remains to say that in the rejection of Weber's own theory we are fully countenanced by M. Barth;[2] and that Dr. Lorinser's special proposition is scouted by M. Senart.[3] The Christian theory on this as on other heads may thus fairly be said to be ruled out of court by logic and scholarship.

XIX.

There is, I think, only one more proposition as to the influence of Christianity on Krishnaism that calls for our attention; and that can be soon disposed of. Among the ricketty theses so long cherished by Professor Weber, not the least paternally favored is his interpretation of a certain mythic tale in the Mahâbhârata,[4] to the effect that once upon a time Nârada, and before him other mythic personages, had visited the Svetadvîpa, or "White Island", beyond the "Sea of Milk"; had there found a race of perfect men, who worshipped the One God; and had there received the knowledge of that God from a supernatural voice. This, the only record that can be pretended to look like a Hindu mention of the importation of Chris-

[1] Art. *Christus en Krishna*, in *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1877, p. 66.
[2] "Religions of India", pp. 218–220, 223.
[3] *Essai*, pp. 342–3, *n*.
[4] xii, 12702, ff.

tianity, is fastened upon by Weber and others as a piece of genuine history; and the "White Island" (which might also mean the "island of the white ones") is assumed to be Alexandria, for no other reason than that Alexandria seems the likeliest place whence the knowledge of Christianity could come.[1] Lassen, who followed Weber in assuming that the legend was a historic testimony, surmised on the other hand that Svetadvîpa would be Parthia, "because the tradition that the Apostle Thomas preached the gospel in that country is an old one". On the other hand, however, he thought it just possible that there had been an apostolic mission to India, though he admitted that it was not without weighty reasons that many ecclesiastical historians held the "India" of Bartholomew and Pantænus to be Yemen. We are thus left to believe, if we choose, that Christianity was very early imported by Christians into India, and yet that Brahmans went elsewhere to learn it: so loosely can a great scholar speculate. It is only worth noting as a further sample of the same laxity that Lassen thought the hypothesis about Svetadvîpa was put on firm ground (*eines festen Grundes*) by citing the fact that in the late Kûrma Purâna there is a legend about Siva appearing in the beginning of the Kali Yuga or Evil Age to teach the "Yoga" system on the Himalayas, and having four scholars, "White", "White horse", "White hair", and "White blood". In the Mahâbhârata legend the Yoga is represented as the source of the true knowledge; hence it follows that both stories refer to the same thing, which is Christianity![2]

It will readily be believed that these assumptions find small favor with later investigators. Telang in India, Tiele in Holland, Senart and Barth in France, all reject them. Mr. Telang's criticism is especially destructive.

"I cannot see the flimsiest possible ground for identifying

[1] Weber, *Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî*, pp. 318–321; *Indische Studien*, i, 400; *Indische Streifen*, ii, 21. Lorinser, as cited. Weber's view is shared by the French Catholic scholar, Nève, who says "It is even certain, at least highly probable, that the White Island . . . . is Alexandria" (*Des Eléments Etrangers du Mythe et du Culte de Krichna*, Paris, 1876, p. 24, quoted by Tiele, *Theolog. Tijdschr.*, as cited, p. 70). I regret I have not been able to meet with M. Nève's book, which is not in the British Museum. It does not appear, however, to have added anything to the German arguments.

[2] *Indische Alterthumskunde*, ii (1849), 1099–1101.

the Svetadvîp of the legend with Alexandria, or Asia Minor, or the British Isles [this has been done by Col. Wilford, As. Res. xi] or any other country or region in this world. The Dvîp is in the first place stated to lie to the north of the Kshîrasamudra; and to the north-west of Mount Meru, and above it by thirty-two thousand yojans. I should like to know what geography has any notion of the quarter of this earth where we are to look for the Sea of Milk and the Mount of Gold. Consider next the description of the wonderful people inhabiting this wonderful Dvîp. [Sanskrit quoted.] It will be news to the world that there were in Alexandria or elsewhere a whole people without any organs of sense, who ate nothing, and who entered the sun, whatever that may mean! Remember, too, that the instruction which Nârad receives in this wonderful land is not received from its inhabitants, but from Bhagavân, from God himself. Nor let it be forgotten that the doctrines which the deity there announces to Nârad cannot be shown to have any connexion with Christianity. On the contrary, I think it must be at once admitted that the whole of the prelection addressed to Nârad bears on its face its essentially Indian character, in the reference to the three qualities, to the twenty-five primal principles, to the description of final emancipation as absorption or entrance into the Divinity, and various other matters of the like character. Against all this what have we to consider? Why, nothing more than the description of the inhabitants as white, and as *ekânta*, which, Professor Weber thinks, means monotheists (*Sed quære*). It appears to me that the story is a mere work of the imagination."[1]

The details as to the supernatural character of the inhabitants of the White Island, be it observed, are ignored by both Weber and Lassen, who pursue the Evhemeristic method. Professor Tiele emphatically endorses Telang:

"With all respect for such men as Lassen and Weber, I can hardly conceive of such a species of historical criticism. All the places and persons in the legend are purely mythological: Nârada can as little as his predecessors be reckoned a historical personage." [Quotes Telang.] "We are here in sheer mythology. Svetadvîpa is a land of fable, a paradise, a dwelling of the sun, such as we meet with in so many religious systems; and the white inhabitants, exalted above personal needs, are spirits of light. Nârada receives there a monotheistic revelation, not from the inhabitants, but from the supreme deity himself; but one only needs to glance at the words in which it is con-

[1] "Bhagavat Gita trans. into Eng. blank verse". Introd. pp. xxxiv–v.

veyed, to perceive its Indian character. And whencesoever the poet may have derived this monotheism, at least the legend says nothing as to its being derived from Alexandria or any other religious centre." [1]

Equally explicit is the decision of M. Senart:

"It is certain that all the constituent elements of this story are either clearly mythological or, in the speculative parts, of very ancient origin: both belong to India, apart from any Christian influence. It is another matter to inquire if the use made of the materials, the manner of their application (the Kâtha Upanishad, i, sq. shows us, for instance, Nasiketas going to the world of Yama to seek philosophical instruction) betrays a Western influence, and preserves a vague memory of borrowings made from Christian doctrines. The question cannot be definitively handled save on positive dates, which we do not possess: inductions are extremely perilous. It has been sought to show (Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, iv, 248, ff) that the Pandavas were the founders of the cult of Vishnu-Krishna. Who would venture to see in these "white heroes", whom Lassen holds on the other hand to be new comers from the West (*Ind. Alt.* i, 800, ff.) the representatives of a Christian influence on the religious ideas of India?" [2]

And M. Barth in turn, even while admitting that Brahmans may have early "visited the Churches of the East", and that there were probably Christian Churches in India "before the redaction of the Mahâbhârata was quite finished", regards the Svetadvîpa legend as a "purely fanciful relation". [3] Common-sense and scholarship combined, I think, may be held to have settled this question also.

It is needless, for the rest, to go into the question of the manner of the "introduction" of the monotheistic idea into India, or into the point raised by Professor Weber [4] as to the commemoration of the Milk Sea and the White Island, and the veneration of Nârada, in the Krishnaite ritual. The latter circumstance plainly proves nothing whatever for his case, though he professes to be placed beyond doubt by it; and the idea that Brahmans could derive the idea of monotheism from the Christians of Alexandria, after Athanasius, is on its merits nothing short of grotesque. It is strange that a disinterested scholar can be led by orthodox habit to see an exemplary

[1] Art. cited, p. 70.
[2] *Essai*, p. 342, *n*.
[3] "Relig. of India", p. 221.
[4] *Ueber die K.*, as last cited.

monotheism in the Christian Trinity; and hardly less strange that he should not recognise how naturally the monotheistic idea tends to be evolved in all religious systems. In other connexions, moreover, Professor Weber assumes the Hindus to have been influenced by Greek thought at and after the conquest of Alexander: why then should they not have had the idea from Greek philosophy, not to speak of Persia, or Egypt, before the Christian era? Even Lassen, while holding the Christian theory of Svetadvîpa, held that no practical influence on Indian religion could justly be attributed to the Christian missionaries in the early centuries, and rejects the view that the Hindus derived monotheism from Christianity.[1] In fine, it is with the alleged doctrinal influence of Christianity on Krishnaism as we have seen it is with the alleged mythological influence. The assumptions are baseless, the proofs visionary, the argumentation illogical, all along the line.

XX.

It may be well to sum up concisely the results, positive and negative, of the foregoing investigation. They may be roughly classed under these two heads. On the one hand,

1. The cult of Krishna is proved by documentary evidence to have flourished extensively in India before the Christian era, though it has developed somewhat and gained much ground since.

2. In its pre-Christian form it certainly contained some of the myth elements which have been claimed as borrowings from Christianity, such as the myth of Kansa; and that myth was made the subject of dramatic representations.

3. Other leading elements in the myth, such as the upbringing of the God among herdsmen and herdswomen, are found long before Christianity in the solar legend which attached to Cyrus; while this myth and the story of the God's birth are found strikingly paralleled in the pre-Christian mythology of Greece and Egypt. There

[1] *Ind. Alterthumsk.*, ii, 1102–3, –5, –9.

is thus an overwhelming presumption in favor of the view that these myth elements were Hindu property long before our era.

4. The fact that Krishna is in the Vedas a dæmon, is rightly to be taken as a proof of the antiquity of his cult. Its mythology points clearly to an extra-Brahmanic origin, though it includes myth-motives which closely coincide with Vedic myth-motives, notably those connected with Agni. The attribute of blackness in a beloved deity, too, is a mark of ancient derivation, remarkably paralleled in the case of the Egyptian Osiris, to whom also was attributed a dæmonic origin. The same attribute is bound up with the conception of the God as a "hiding one", which is common to the oldest mythologies.

5. Ritual is far more often the basis of myth than the converse; and the Krishnaite Birth-ritual in itself raises a presumption in favor of the antiquity of the cult.

6. The leading elements in the Krishna myth are inexplicable save on the view that his cultus is ancient. If it were of late and Brahmanic origin it could not conceivably have taken-in the legend of the upbringing among herdsmen.

7. The ethical teaching bound up with Krishnaism in the Bhagavat Gîtâ is a development, on distinctly Hindu lines, of Vedic ideas, and is no more derived from the New Testament than it is from the literature of Greece and Rome.

8. The close coincidences in the legends of Krishna and Buddha are to be explained in terms of borrowing by the latter from the former, and not *vice versa*.

In fine, we are led to the constructive position that Krishna is an ancient extra-Brahmanic Indian deity, possibly in his earliest phase non-Aryan, who was worshipped by Aryan-speakers long before our era, and, either before or after his adoption by the Brahmans, or more probably in both stages, was connected with myths which are enshrined in the Vedas. He acquired some of the leading qualities of Agni, and supplanted Indra, whose ancient prestige he acquired. All which positively ascertained facts and fully justified conclusions are in violent conflict with the hypothesis that Krishnaism borrowed mythological and theological matter from Christism.

On the other hand,

1. Such phænomena as the Birth-Festival ritual and the pictorial representation of the babe Krishna as suckled by his mother, cannot reasonably be held to be borrowed from the Christians, any more than the myths positively proved to be pre-Christian. On the contrary, since the Christian Virgin-myth and Virgin-and-Child worship are certainly of Pagan origin, and of comparatively late Christian acceptance, and since the Virgin-myth was associated with Buddhism even for Westerns in the time of Jerome, the adoration of a Suckling-God is to be presumed pre-Christian in India (which had a Babe-God in Agni in the Veda); and it becomes conceivable that certain parts of the Christian Birth-legend are derived from Krishnaism. It is an extravagance to suppose the converse.

2. It is equally extravagant to suppose that such a usage as the Krishnaite "name-giving" was borrowed from the short-lived usage of the Church of Alexandria in the matter of combining the Nativity and the Epiphany. A similar usage prevailed in the pre-Christian cult of Hercules, and was presumably widespread.

3. Nor can we without defying all probability suppose that such motives as the "ox-and-ass", the "manger", the "tax-paying", and the "Christophoros", were borrowed by the Hindus from Christianity, which itself unquestionably borrowed the first two and the last from Paganism. The fair surmise is rather that the third was borrowed from India; and the necessary assumption, in the present state of our knowledge, is that the others also were ancient in India, whether or not any of them thence reached Christism in its absorbent stage. It is further possible that the introduction of shepherds into the Christian Birth-legend in the late third Gospel was suggested by knowledge of the Krishna legend. The converse hypothesis has been shown to be preposterous.

4. The myth of the massacre of the innocents is the more to be regarded as pre-Christian in India because it connects naturally with the motive of the attempted slaying of the God-child, and is already found in Semitic mythology in the story of Moses, which is minutely paralleled in one particular in the Egyptian myth of the concealment of Horus in the floating island,[1] and related

[1] Herodotus, ii, 156.

in others to the universal myth of the attempted slaying of the divine child. The natural presumption is that the Hindu massacre of the innocents is as old as the Kansa myth: the onus of disproof lies with those who allege borrowing from the Gospels.

5. The resemblances between certain Krishnaite and Christian miracles, in the same way, cannot be set down to Hindu borrowing from Christism when so many of the parallel myths[1] are certainly not so borrowed, and so many more presumably in the same case. For the rest, some of the parallels alleged on the Christian side are absurdly far-fetched, and bracketed with etymological arguments which are beneath serious notice.

6. The lateness of the Purânic stories in literary form is no argument against their antiquity. Scholars are agreed that late documents often preserve extremely old myth-material.[2]

In fine, as against the Christian theory, we are led not only to the conviction that the Christian legend is a patch-work of pre-Christian mythology, but to the presumption that some of it came from Krishnaism. And this presumption is fortified by the correlated evidence that much of Christism *did* come from Buddhism. Through that medium, if not directly, it may have derived features of the myth of the Descent into Hell. Christianity, in short, we know to be wholly manufactured within historic times: Krishnaism we have seen to have had a pre-historic existence. Thus every claim made in this connexion by Christians recoils more or less forcibly on their own creed.

Conclusion.

I cannot hope, of course, that the foregoing exposition will be found free either from errors or oversights in matter of fact or from miscarriages in theory. Even if there were not the substantial drawback of very imperfect qualification on my part, the circumstance that the essay

[1] It need hardly be mentioned that not a tithe of the mythical stories connected with Krishna have been mentioned above. They are extremely numerous, and are all either explicable in terms of the sun-myth or mere poetic adornments of the general legend.

[2] Compare Mr. Lang, "Myth, Ritual, and Religion", i, 291.

was in course of being printed while it was being composed, told against sound arrangement as well as against ripe treatment. Already I have found errors which have passed the press, and omissions which can only be indicated by a postscript. I can but hope that my survey will serve to put the subject in some respects in a clearer light than formerly. On the Christian side the matter had first been grossly obscured by religious fanaticism, and then been even more dangerously darkened by honest and pre-eminent scholarship which labored unconsciously under general Christian prepossessions. On the Freethought side there had been corresponding misconceptions, arising out of the darkness created by the Christians. A strenuous Free-thinker of the early part of this century, Godfrey Higgins—a scholar whose energy and learning too often missed their right fruition just because his work was a desperate revolt against a whole world of pious obscurantism—unwittingly put rationalists on a false scent by adopting the view that Krishna had in an ancient legend been crucified, and that it was the missionaries who had contrived to withhold the fact from general European knowledge.[1] His assumption rested mainly on a freak of the archæologist Moor,[2] who in collecting Hindu God-images had a Christian crucifix presented to him as a native "Wittoba"—a late minor Avatar commonly represented as pierced in one foot. Krishna is indeed represented in the Purânic legend as being slain by an arrow[3] which pierced his foot, here comparing curiously with the solar Achilles of Hellenic mythology; but he is not crucified. The later missionaries no doubt have suppressed what they conveniently could; and it is far from certain that we yet know all the relevant modern facts. As long ago as 1626, the Portuguese Jesuit Andrade, in his letters from Tibet to the General of his Order, testifies to the existence of a crucifixion myth in that country. They believe, he tells, in the triune God, but give him absurdly wrong names, and

"They agree with us in saying that Christ" [*i.e.*, their Second

[1] "Anacalypsis," 1836, i, 144-6 (ch. ii).

[2] "Hindu Pantheon," pp. 416—20, and pl. 98.

[3] In the Mahâbhârata and the Vishnu Purâna the slayer is the hunter Jara (= "old age", "decay"). In the Bhagavat Purâna, the slayer is the forester Bhil. In both cases, the slaying is unintentional, but predestined.

Person, known as "the great book"] "died for the saving of the human race; but they do not know the manner of his death, knowing little or nothing of the holy cross, holding only that he died shedding his blood, which flowed from his veins on account of the nails with which he was put to death. It is very true that in their book the cross is represented, with a triangle in the middle, and certain mystic letters which they cannot explain."

Andrade further testifies that there were three or four goldsmiths of the King of Tibet, natives of other countries, to whom he gave money to make a cross; and they told him that in their country, two months' journey off, there were many such crosses as his, some of wood, others of metals. These were usually in the churches, but on five days in the year they were put on the public roads, when all the people worshipped them, strewing flowers and lighting lamps before them; "which crosses in their language they call Iandar".[1]

This evidence is remarkably corroborated in 1772 by the Jesuit Giorgi, who, in the very act of maintaining that all Krishnaism was a perversion of Christianity, declares on his own knowledge of Tibet, that in Nepal it was customary in the month of August to raise in honor of the God Indra *cruces amictas abrotono*, crosses wreathed with (?) abrotonus, and to represent him as crucified, and bearing the sign *Telech* on forehead, hands, and feet. He appends two woodcuts. One is a very singular representation of a crucifix, in which the cross seems wholly covered with leaves, and only the head, hands and feet of the crucified one appear, the hands and feet as if pierced with nails, the forehead bearing a mark. In the other, only the upper part of the deity's body is seen, with the arms extended, the hands pierced, the forehead marked, but without any cross.[2] Godfrey Higgins reproduced and commented on those pictures, but I can find no discussion of the matter in recent writers so far as I have gone, though it appears that the Nepalese usage in question still flourishes. Dr.

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[1] *Histoire de ce qui s'est passé av Royavme dv Tibet*, trad. d'Italien en François, Paris, 1629, pp. 45-6, 49-50, 51. *Cf.* p. 84. Andrade will be found cited by M. V. La Croze, *Hist. du Christ. des Indes*, La Haye, 1724, p. 514. La Croze has a theory of Nestorian influences.

[2] *Alphabetum Thibetanum, Romae*, 1772, p. 203.

H. A. Oldfield states that in the Indra festival in August-September at the present time, "figures of Indra, *with outstretched arms*, are erected all about the city"[1]—*i.e.*, Kathmandu—but he gives no further details. Professor Weber would seem to have entirely overlooked the matter, since he makes no allusion to it. This, however, goes for nothing as regards Krishnaism, though Krishna was the supplanter of Indra. The only suggestions of the cross in Krishnaism, apart from its appearance in late sculpture or pictorial art, are in the curious legend[2] that the God was buried at the meeting point of three rivers—which would form a cross—and in the story of Yasoda binding the child Krishna to a tree, or to two trees. The trees opened and there appeared two Brahmans —a tale which the indignant Giorgi held to be a perversion of the crucifixion of Christ between two thieves.[3] The story given by Wilford[4] of the holy Brahman Mandâvya, who was crucified among thieves in the Deccan, and afterwards named Sulastha or "cross-borne", is stated by the narrator to be told at great length in the "Sayadrichandra, a section of the Scanda Purâna", and to be given briefly in the Mahâbhârata and alluded to in the Bhagavat Purâna "and its commentary"; but as the matter is never mentioned by Weber or other later Sanskritists it must be, I presume, one of the frauds practised on Wilford by his pandits.[5] The Christian crucifixion story falls to be studied in other lights, one of which was indicated above.

It may be that I have in my turn overstrained the possibilities of Christian indebtedness to Krishnaism as regards some minor myth motives; but at least I have in no way staked the argument on such suppositions. I have not even founded on the decision of Wilson (who is so often

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[1] "Sketches from Nepal," 1880, ii, 314.

[2] Balfour's *Ind. Cycl.*, art. *Krishna*.

[3] *Alphab. Thib.*, p. 253. Giorgi held that the detail of Krishna's commending the care of his 1,600 wives to Arjuna was a fiction, based on the records of the multitude of women who followed Christ from Galilee! (p. 259).

[4] "Asiatic Researches," x, 69.

[5] On this see Prof. Max Müller's article "On False Analogies in Comparative Theology", in the *Contemporary Review* of April, 1870, reprinted with his "Introduction to the Science of Religion", 1873. I am not aware that there has been any detailed discrimination of the genuine and the spurious in Wilford's compilations.

cited to other purpose by Professor Weber) to the effect that Gnostic Christian doctrines were borrowed from Hinduism in the second century.[1] That there was then "an active communication between India and the Red Sea" is indeed certain; and it is, I think, now beyond doubt that Christism borrowed from Buddhism; but the testimony of Epiphanius,[2] on which Wilson founds, is clearly worthless, were it only because he uses the term "India" at random, like so many other ancient writers. It is impossible to say what is the force of the reference of Juvenal[3] to the "hired Indian, skilled as to the earth and the stars"; and though there is no reason to doubt that India was actually visited by Apollonius of Tyana, and no uncertainty, for instance, as to the embassies sent by Porus to Augustus, and by the king of "Taprobane" to Claudius,[4] it is one thing to be convinced of the communication, and another to know what were the results. I have made no attempt to build on the fact that the Christians made a sacred place of the Egyptians Matarea,[5] which certainly suggests knowledge of Mathura. I simply insist on the proved error of the main Christian assumptions, on the utter illegitimacy of the others, and on the reasonable contrary hypothesis in certain cases. As to the question of authority, I have chosen rather to multiply extracts from accredited scholars than to seem to claim weight for my own opinion apart from argument.

In so far as I may have gone astray, I know I lay myself open to that kind of criticism which is bestowed on the mistakes of rationalism by writers whose customary frame of mind on religious matters is the negation of reason. The believer lives for his own part in a thought-world of lawless credulity; but if the unbeliever should in his research deviate even unimportantly from strict

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[1] Trans. of Vishnu Purâna, Introd. p. viii.

[2] *Adversus Manichæos*, i, (*Hæreses*, xlvi *sive* lxvi).

[3] vi, 585.

[4] Strabo, xv, 1, 74; Pliny, Nat. Hist., vi, 24 (22). It is worth noting that Pliny in this chapter says of the people of Taprobane (doubtless Ceylon) that "Hercules is the deity they worship". This confirms our previous argument as to the antiquity of the hero-God worships.

[5] 1 Infancy, viii.

historical or verbal accuracy, he is impeached on the instant as an ignoramus or worse. And when he errs grossly, like the unfortunate M. Jacolliot, who, ill-fitted for exact study in any case, seems to have fared worse than Wilford at the hands of Hindu Shapiras, his religious critics point to his miscarriage as a sample of rationalist research in general. Jacolliot's "La Bible dans l'Inde", which has misled Freethinkers inexpert in Indian matters, was contemptuously dismissed at the start by such critics as Professor Tiele and M. Senart, who are both "sceptics"; but the Rev. Dr. Ellinwood of New York, who seems to get his whole knowledge on the subject from the review article of Professor Max Müller, discusses Jacolliot's extravagances, with the candor of his profession, in a magazine paper under the heading of "The Credulity of Scepticism".[1] Jacolliot's follies are held to put in countenance the follies of Christianity.

The present research ought, of course, to have been undertaken by a Sanskritist. There did not seem, however, the slightest prospect of its being so undertaken in England, since the few Sanskritists are mostly in the Universities,[2] which in this country do almost no scholarly work that would be unwelcome to the Church. We are still in the thick of bought scholarship, bought silence, bought orthodoxy; and even where our scholarship is not perverted by religious prejudice or paralysed by ecclesiastical control of endowment, it is too often vitiated by the temper of conformity. In matters connected with religion, you cannot as a rule trust an English scholar to say what he knows. There seemed, therefore, nothing for it but that a mere "sceptic" should grapple with the problem in the light of reason and of the English and Continental literature on the subject. For Continental scholars, the Christian view of Krishnaism had been sufficiently over-ruled by Tiele and Senart; but I was fain to hope that something might be done for the English reader, even though the weighty authority of M. Barth had been ignored. It may be that after such a beginning the matter will be taken up, even in the "church-ridden

[1] *Missionary Review of the World*, New York, Feb., 1890.

[2] Dr. John Muir, whose memory is above my praise, effectively answered Dr. Lorinser; but a controversial undertaking like the present lay outside of his scholarly work.

kingdom of the leopards,"[1] by more competent hands. In that case the credit, such as it is, will lie with the editor of the *National Reformer*, who has opened the pages of his journal to the present essay, and has thus made possible a publication which probably no other English press than his would meddle with.

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[1] "In dem aberkirchlichen 'Reiche der Leoparden'," a phrase of Alexander von Humboldt in a letter printed by Professor Weber, *Ueber die Krishnajanmâshtamî*, p. 314.

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

Pp. 6, 34, 73, *n.* 1. *For* "Georgi" *read* "Giorgi" (Lat. "Georgius").

P. 8, *note* 3. *For* "Alterthumskunde" *read* "Alterthümer". (The work is a translation, by J. F. Fich, of papers from the "Asiatic Researches", with notes and comments by Kleuker.)

,, 14, *line* 12. *For* "the legends" *read* "no legends".

,, 16, *note* 2. *For* "i, 48" *read* "i, 42".

,, 21, *line* 11 *from bottom*. *For* "controversial missionary" *read* "Christian propagandist".

,, 36, *note* 3. *For* "Sovereign Sun" *read* "Mother of the Gods".

,, 46, *note* 2, *end*. *For* "Müller, as last cited," *read* "Max Müller, 'Natural History of Religion,' 1889".

,, 54, *note* 7. The view that Astyages = Azidahaka, which appears to have been first advanced by Lenormant, is scouted by Tiele, "Outlines," p. 179. "Azhi dahâka is a purely Aryan demon, and Astyages has nothing to do with him." This view, however, will have to be tested by the reconstructed theory of Aryan derivation; and in any case it is not clear why Astyages should not rank as "purely Aryan". Cp. Taylor, "Origin of the Aryans", pp. 190, 319-321.

,, 58. *Re* the Seven Gates. The antiquity of this myth is proved by its occurrence in the legend of Ishtar's Descent into Hades, "Records of the Past," vol. i.

,, 60, *note* 1. *For* "Callimaohus" *read* "Callimachus".

,, 64. *Re* ox and ass in Krishna ritual, Professor Weber seems in one passage (*Ueber die K.*, p. 339) to imply that one ox and one ass stand under the shed; in another (pp. 280-1) it would appear that what he refers to are the *images* of oxen and asses which stand beside those of the leading personages of the legend.

,, 72. It should have been noted in Sec. xii that "the winnowing fan, the *Mystica vannus Iacchi*, is always used in the rites of Cal, Cali, and Durga; but the Hindus at present affix no other idea of mystery to it than its being an appendage to husbandry. They use it as a tray, on which they place before the image of the Deity the . . . articles used in the ceremony. . . . On all solemnities the rituals prescribe exclusively the use of this fan, which they call Surp." Patterson, in "Asiatic Researches", viii, 52.

,, 79, *note* 3. The antiquity of the "Dulva" passage is disputed by Weber, "Hist. Ind. Lit.", Eng. tr., p. 199. But see p. 198, *note* 210.

P. 90, *note* 2. *For* "verson" *read* "version".

,, 92, *note* 5. *Re* the week, cp. Max Müller, "On False Analogies in Comparative Theology"; *Indian Antiquary*, March, 1874 (iii, 90); Kuenen, "Religion of Israel," Eng. tr. i, 264; Wellhausen, "Prolegomena," p. 113.

,, 97, *note* 3. It should have been mentioned that Krishna, who is identified with "Budha", the name given by the Hindus to the planet Mercury (Max Müller, "False Analogies," in vol. "Introd. to Sc. of Rel.", p. 308), is himself a "conveyer of the souls of the dead", and is invoked at funerals by his name Heri, the cry being "Heri-bol!". Balfour's *Ind. Cycl.*, art. NEMI.

,, 100, *middle*. The story of Queen Garmathone and Osiris is given in the pseudo-Plutarchean treatise "Of the Names of Rivers and Mountains", *sub tit.* Nile (xvi).

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THE

PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND:

An Indictment of the Scottish Church.

BY

JOHN ROBERTSON.

LONDON:
FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
63, FLEET STREET, E.C.
1886.

The following pages constitute the Scottish section of the series of papers entitled "Sins of the Church", directed against the Establishments of England, Scotland, and Wales. The separate issue is made for the convenience of Scotch readers.

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IX.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

In the history of Scotland since the Reformation the term "the Church" has a more various significance than belongs to it in the records of any other modern State. Even in the Dark Ages, so-called, the early fraternity of the Culdees, by their independence of Roman control, gave a tinge of ecclesiastical diversity to Scotland's experience; and when once the Papal authority in matters spiritual and temporal was repudiated by the Scottish Parliament in 1560, the people entered on a period of religious vicissitude in which for a century and a half no single church polity prevailed for more than a generation, Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism alternating in varying strength as the various political forces fluctuated. Such a species of confusion, however, creates no difficulty for the onlooker who sees ecclesiastical history from the standpoint of religious neutrality. The general principle on which the State Establishment of religion is condemned, is, I take it, that any and every sect so established is certain to abuse its power, and that its form of government, while it may affect the nature and extent of the abuse, has little or nothing to do with the temper and attitude of the privileged body towards liberty and enlightenment. The mode varies, the spirit is the same.

In Scotland, as in England, it has been the custom to plead the cause of the Establishment as that of an institution beneficently bound up with the country's history, the molestation of which would be an outrage on the very spirit of national continuity. In Scotland even more than in England has the process of the Reformation been magnified and fabulised; the result there being the growth of an essentially mythological notion of the Reformation period and of the men who figured in it. To this day there circulate among the devout poor in Scotland narratives in which Reformation heroes are represented as either

working miracles or having miracles worked in their behalf. The later editions of the "Scots Worthies" probably contain few of the old stories of supernatural interposition for the succor of the elect and the destruction of the wicked; but on such fables the ecclesiasticism of modern Scotland was to a large extent nourished; and the survival of the tradition has still some share in the temper of the resistance to the withdrawal of State recognition from the Church, though, as it happens, the tradition is not peculiar to the privileged sect. To show what the Reformation actually was and did, the manner of its occurrence, its effect on the political and social after-course of the people, and above all its influence on their intellectual development—to do this briefly is the purpose of the following pages.

It is by this time pretty well established that in Scotland as in England the immediately effective force in the Reformation was the temporal motive of a hankering after the Church's property among the powerful classes. In the north, no doubt, there was much more of a popular movement of hostility to the corrupt Romish Church than in the south: there always had been among the Scottish people a relatively closer participation in public affairs than can be traced in the early history of the commons of England, the difference arising in the main out of the constant turmoil in which Scottish life was so long kept by the two forces of hostile outside pressure and civil strife. But while the Scottish commonalty mixed closely in the uprising of Protestantism, it is sufficiently clear that the determining power was the interested adoption of their cause by the nobles. So much is admitted by clerical partisans of the Reformation. "It is a great mistake," says the younger McCrie ("Sketches of Scottish Church History", 2nd ed., p. 48), "to suppose that the Scottish Reformation originated with the common people, or in the spirit of rebellion. It would be much nearer the truth to say, that Scotland was reformed by her noblemen and gentlemen." And the impartial student can see very well what such a writer would not see, that what the noblemen and gentlemen were mainly interested in was the plunder. For over a century the issue had been strenuously led up to by the policy of the throne, which, always weak in that land of feudal strifes and scanty civilisation, assiduously

sought to strengthen itself by strengthening the Church. As early as the thirteenth century the sons of St. Margaret had richly endowed religion; and at the death of James V. in 1542 the policy of that and previous Stewart kings had made the Scottish hierarchy wealthier in proportion to the country's total wealth than that of perhaps any State in Christendom. Not less marked than James's favor to the Church had been his hostility to the nobles, and at his death the enmity between the two classes had reached the highest pitch. Other influences had been spreading "Reformation principles"; but the adoption of anti-Romish doctrines by the nobility in general was essentially a phase of the struggle for existence between two powerful orders. The lords, growing ever stronger during the regencies of Mary's minority, naturally joined in the spiritual attack on their temporal enemies as a matter of tactics, seeing in the ministrations of the Protestant preachers an extremely serviceable engine for the overturning of an institution that could not subsist in the entire absence of popular attachment. In this spirit they sent abroad for Knox in 1559 as for a useful instrument to prosecute the work they had already carried so far. A few devotees there were among them, no doubt, just as there remained a few Catholics; but, as Dr. Burton critically observes of one group of the Protestant nobles of that time ("History of Scotland," revised ed., vol. v., p. 217): "it would be difficult to find in the Christian world men with less religion or more ruffianism". Even Mr. McCrie could not deny that when once the ecclesiastical revolution was carried the nobility unblushingly appropriated by far the greater part of the old Church's property. Only by strenuous efforts did the new clergy get any of it at all. The best arrangement they could force on the for-once united nobility—all-powerful for the moment in the interval between the death of the Queen Regent and the arrival of the young Queen Mary—was that the Church revenues should be divided into three parts, of which one was to be shared between the Crown and the Protestant ministers, while the other two were understood to remain with the disestablished Catholic dignitaries during their lives. What really happened, of course, was that the latter were promptly fleeced by the baronage, being only too glad to compound with the masters of the situation on any terms;

while the ministers were left to scramble for their fraction of a third. (See Burton's History, iv., 37—41; Knox's "History of the Reformation", Laing's ed. of his works, ii., 542; Calderwood's "History of the Kirk", Wodrow Society's ed., ii., 172; and Spottiswoode's "History of the Church", ed. 1851, vol. ii., p. 64.) The nobles, regretfully observes Mr. McCrie, "showed a degree of avarice and rapacity hardly to be expected from persons who had taken such active part in reforming the Church". Knox's comment was more dramatic. "Weill", he reports himself to have said "on the stoolle of Edinburgh" ("History of the Reformation", Laing's edition of his works, vol. ii., p. 310)—"Weill, yf the end of this ordour, pretended to be tacken for sustentatioun of the Ministeris, be happy, my judgment failleth me; for I am assured that the Spreit of God is nott the auctor of it; for, first, I see Twa partis freely given to the Devill, and the Thrid maun be devided betwix God and the Devill". "Who wold have thought", he exclaims again, "that when Joseph reulled Egypt, that his brethren should have travailled for vitallis, and have returned with empty seckis unto their families?" And, again (p. 312): "O happy servandis of the Devill, and miserable servandis of Jesus Christ; yf that after this lyef thair war nott hell and heavin!" (see also pp. 128–9). The chagrined ministers loudly demanded that they should have the entire reversion of the endowment. They "seem to have made the mistake", as Dr. Burton judicially puts it (iv., 39), "of supposing that the active energy with which their lay brethren helped them to pull down Popery was actually the fruit of religious zeal; and to have expected that they took from the one Church merely to give to the other. The landholders, on their part, thought such an expectation so utterly preposterous that they did not condescend to reason with it; but, without any hypocritical attempt to varnish their selfishness, called the expectations of the ministers 'a fond imagination'." And such it certainly proved to be. The condition of the new clergy for many a day was one of distinct hardship, their pittances being so irregularly paid that some fairly abandoned their calling (Spottiswoode, ii., 64).

It is only just, in this connexion, to acquit them in part of a charge often brought against them—that of bringing about the general destruction of the old religious edifices.

Certainly the clergy were zealous to annihilate all the artistic adjuncts, which for them were mere "idolatry"; and the rank and file were responsible for the destruction as well as the plunder of many monasteries, some of which were noble buildings. But, while there would have been some practical cogency in the view so often attributed to Knox, that "the best way to drive off the rooks is to pull down the nests", as a matter of fact Knox was for a different policy, though, as we shall see, the temper of demolition was not absent from the clerical body. There has been, on this subject, a seesaw of sweeping aspersion and equally sweeping vindication of the Reformers, in which the truth has been alternately made too white and too black. In the earlier part of this century, an influential antiquarian movement fostered the view among Episcopalians and unbelievers that the Reformers were a mere set of frenzied fanatics who sought to destroy every scrap of architecture associated with Papistry. Cooler research noted that the great monasteries in the southern counties had been burned in the English invasion under Hertford, during Mary's infancy, in 1545—the second under that leader; and the more liberal Presbyterians eagerly proclaimed that no guilt of that kind lay with their forefathers. But to speak so is to ignore some of the plainest facts of the Reformation. The invading English general did indeed display his zeal in the service of his master and the cause of Protestantism by burning, in addition to 243 villages and 192 separate structures, the Abbeys of Kelso, Melrose, Dryburgh, Roxburgh, and Coldingham (Burton, iii., 247–8); as he had burned Holyrood Abbey and Palace, with the town of Edinburgh, in 1544 (Laing's Knox, ii., 121, *note*); but there is not the least reason to assume that the southern edifices, if not so destroyed, would have escaped the Reformation mobs any more than did the monasteries of the north. The Protestants had already destroyed the monasteries at Dundee and sacked the Abbey of Lindores in their first outbreak in 1543 (Burton, iii., 250), two years before Hertford's second invasion; they had at the same period attacked the church of Arbroath and the Blackfriars Monastery at Edinburgh; and in 1559 they wrecked monasteries all over the country. But it is important to notice on this head that the main devastation of the latter year was not only not wrought at

the behest of the clerical and aristocratic leaders, but was done in spite of their resistance. The failure of Dr. McCrie to vindicate Knox in this regard is a curious illustration of the helplessness of a partisan in his own walk when he has to hold the scales between sections of his party. Knox's History shows in the clearest way that the leading Reformer opposed the wrecking of the fabrics even of the monasteries. Describing the opening outbreak at Perth, involving the ruin of the Greyfriars', Blackfriars', and Charterhouse monasteries—the third "a buylding of a wonderouse coast and greatness"—he writes that the riot was begun against the exhortations of the preacher present and of the magistrates, by a multitude, "not of the gentelmen, neyther of thame that war earnest professouris, but of the raschall multitude" (i., 322); and in this he is followed by Calderwood (History of the Kirk, i., 441). Again, dealing with the burning of the Abbey and Palace of Scone (pp. 360–2), he tells how Murray and Argyle on the first day saved the buildings, and how it was only on the breaking out of a fresh riot on the second day, over the stabbing of a Dundee plunderer by the bishop's son, that "the multitude, easelie inflambed, gave the alarme", and a fresh mob from Perth set Abbey and Palace on fire. "Wharat", says Knox, "no small nomber of us war offended, that patientlie we could nocht speak till any that war of Dundie or Sanct Johnestoun" [*i.e.*, Perth]. His superstition, indeed, makes him incline to suspect that there must have been a divine dispensation in the matter; just as he seems fain to make out, in his own despite, that the mischief-makers at Perth had after all been disinterested religionists,[1] anxious "onlie to abolish idolatrie, the places and monumentis thareof"; but of the Scone business he expressly says in his conclusion (p. 362) "assuredlie, yf the labouris or travell of any man culd have saved that place, it had nocht bein at that tyme destroyed; for men of greattest estimatioun lawboured with all diligence for the savetie of it". On the same page, his common-sense again coming uppermost, he tells that the utter destruction

[1] The inconsistencies of Knox's text on this head are so marked as almost to suggest some tampering with the original MS. before its publication; but revisals in different moods would probably suffice to lead into self-contradiction a man naturally clear-headed, but always incitable to vaticination by his theistic fervor.

of the friaries at Stirling was accomplished by the "rascheall multitude" before the arrival of the occupying force under Murray and Argyle; and yet again (p. 363) he records that at Edinburgh "the poore" had "maid havock of all suche thingis as was movable", in the monasteries of the Black and Gray Friars, "befoir our cuming, and had left nothing bot bair wallis, yea, nocht sa muche as door or windok; wharthrow we war the less trubilled in putting ordour to suche places." It was thus the common people of the towns who, eager to fleece the monks whose gross venality and hypocrisy they knew so well, proceeded from plunder to the savage destruction of the fine buildings for which they had no appreciation whatever; while men like Knox and Murray would gladly have preserved such edifices. The Churchmen had left themselves no friends. As the writer of the "Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents" says: "In all this tyme all kirkmennis goodis and geir wer spoulzeit and reft fra thame, in euerie place quhair the samyne culd be apprehendit; for euerie man for the maist pairt that culd get anything pertenyng to any kirkmen, thocht the same as wele won geir" (p. 269). The people were wreaking vengeance rather than assailing an alleged idolatry; they pulled down the houses for hatred of the dwellers. The destruction was general and deplorable, the already defaced and poverty-stricken country being thus deprived by its own children of a large part of what little show of material wealth it had left. Knox (ii., 167) tells how the Protestants of the West "burnt Paislay . . . . kest down Failfurd, Kilwynning, and a part of Crossragwell"; and from Balfour (Annals i., 316) and the English envoy Sadler (Burton, iii., 353, *note*) and other sources we know that similar destruction was wrought at Cambuskenneth, Linlithgow, Dunfermline, and St. Andrews; while the clergy themselves everywhere saw to the smashing of "images" and altars. Nay, the ministers did not entirely spare the churches as is claimed for them by Burton (p. 353). When the historian asserts that "the fabric of the churches did not excite their destructive indignation," he overlooks the record that in the very first General Assembly of the new Church, held in December 1560, it was resolved "that the kirk of Restalrig, as monument of Idolatry, be razed and utterly casten downe and destroyed"

("Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland," ed. 1839, p. 3). Further, though the admission is not decisive, it is to be noted that Dr. McCrie accepts for the Reformation the responsibility of the destruction of the Chapel of Loretto at Musselburgh ("Life of Knox", Crichton's ed., 1840, p. 151, *note*). The residual truth is that, setting aside the demolition of one or two churches, presumably of a highly ornamental type, and the utter annihilation of all ecclesiastical art work, the Protestant clergy are not chargeable with the ruin of the fabrics of the great cathedrals and churches. Apart from the declarations of Knox, they must have the credit, such as it is, of the preserved letter of instructions by Argyle, Murray, and Ruthven, in which the lairds of Arntilly and Kinvaid are directed to burn all the images, altars, and monuments of idolatry in the Cathedral of Dunkeld, with the proviso: "Faill not, bot ze tak guid heyd that neither the dasks, windocks, nor durris be ony ways hurt or broken, eyther glassin wark or iron wark". (McCrie's Life of Knox, Appendix, p. 372.) That McCrie should not have given any effect in his biography to Knox's repudiation of the pulling down of the monasteries must apparently be attributed to his unwillingness to put on record that the Reformation was in any sense a work of reckless mobs[1]—an unwillingness paralleled in his son's reluctance to admit that the Protestant aristocracy were mostly hungry land-grabbers. The facts, looked at fairly, are seen to relate naturally to the known principles of human nature. The natural instincts of the rude populace led to the wreckage of the monasteries: the clergy, fanatically eager to destroy the signs of "idolatry", might well seek to preserve the buildings; and nobles like Murray would readily help them. It was specially to the interest of the clergy to retain such buildings. There seems to be no good authority for Spottiswoode's story, made so familiar by Scott in "Rob Roy", that Glasgow Cathedral was only saved by the armed resistance of the city craftsmen to an attempt against it by the zealots (see Burton, vi., 222, *note*); and there is on the other hand documentary evidence that the clergy bitterly reproached the greedy landowners, who were the last and

[1] He seems, however, to have been unaware that the southern monasteries were destroyed by Hertford. See his second note on p. 151, and the text.

worst culprits, for the sordid apathy with which they let the preserved edifices, great and small, fall into utter ruin for sheer lack of ordinary repairs. The roofs of cathedrals were soon stripped of their lead for purposes of war, and the Protestant nobility, alike in their private and in their public capacities, refused to lift a finger for their maintenance. On them must fall the final reproach. Glasgow Cathedral, on the other hand, was preserved by municipal supervision; and "there is abundant testimony that the clergy of the Reformation did their best for the preservation and good order of the fabrics of the churches" (Burton, iv., 355); though their poverty disabled them for that particular form of self-aggrandisement. What the new Church did as such, when thus disappointed of the rewards for which its clergy had hoped, was to get hold of the popular mind with a thoroughness which would otherwise have been impossible, and, accordingly, to exert to the utmost its influence for the restriction and subjection of the people's intellectual and social life. Wealth and power have been natural objects of desire to every established Church, and if that of Scotland after the Reformation could not acquire the former it could still attain the latter.

Scarcely was the legislative process of the Reformation accomplished when the clerical passion for power began to manifest itself. The political change was effected by the Estates in August 1560, and in 1561, just before the arrival of Queen Mary from France, the secular-minded among the people of Edinburgh had a taste of the quality of the new institution. Under Romanism the people of Scotland, like those of other European countries, had regularly practised such ancient semi-pagan semi-Christian mummeries as the Bacchic feast of the Ass, and such customs naturally gave them a taste for pageants in general. Accordingly, in the summer of 1561 the Edinburgh tradesfolk proposed as of old to celebrate the pageant of Robin Hood. But the new clergy had set their faces against all such performances, and, armed with an Act of Parliament, the Lords of the Congregation, which at that time meant the clergy *plus* the countenance of the nobles, prohibited the undertaking. The craftsmen persisted; disturbance followed; and a "cordinar" or shoemaker, charged with both theft and rioting, was put in jail—in the old "Heart of Midlothian"—and sentenced to death.

To John Knox, as being the most influential public man at the moment, the friends of the condemned man applied for mercy; but the Reformer and the magistrates, in the words of the contemporary chronicler, would "dae nothing bot have him hangit". Only by a forcible riot and storming of the gaol was the representative of popular rights saved. (See Burton iv., 27; Knox's History, ii., 157–9; and the "Diurnal of Remarkable Occurrents", published by the Bannatyne Club, pp. 65–6.) The magistrates were terrorised, and the clergy had to be content with holding the "haill multitude excommunicat" till, so says Knox, they "maid humble sute unto the kirk". The preachers of course knew that they could only maintain their position by an absolute moral control over the mind of the populace. That they in the long run acquired, and there was virtually an end in Scotland of popular pageants, and of every form of dramatic, musical, and imitative art, for many generations.

The uppermost thought of the Protestant clergy, of course, was to complete the suppression of the old faith. The Act of 24th August, 1560, had provided that the administering, or being present at the administration, of the mass, should be punishable on a first offence by forfeiture of possessions and corporal punishment; on a second, by banishment; and on a third by death. (Scots Acts of Parliament, ed. 1814, vol. ii., p. 534.) This pointed, considering the spirit of the times, rather to a minimising of bloodshed than to an absolute desire to take the lives of Papists in any number; and in point of fact the history of the extirpation of the old faith in Scotland, so far as we have it, is a much less sanguinary record than the corresponding narrative for England. What happened in the first instance was a wholesale expulsion. (See Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 69.) But three points have to be kept in view: first, that Queen Mary came to her kingdom immediately after the ecclesiastical revolution, and that she always evaded the ratification of the Reformation Acts, which were so distasteful to her; second, that, apart from the Queen's unwillingness to let Catholics be persecuted, a large section of the nobility looked very coldly on the pretensions of the Presbyterian clergy to exercise civil power; and, third, that many of the criminal records of that period have been lost. (See Burton, v.,

10.) It will be found on examination, too, that only a few heretics had been put to death in Scotland by the Romish Church in the days of its power; and it may have been that the Protestant laity were unwilling to take more lives than the old church had done. But if, with Protestant partisans, we take the line of arguing that it was not for lack of will that the Romish priesthood had burnt so few Protestant emissaries, it will be impossible to reject a similar conclusion in regard to the Protestant policy after the overturn. Certainly nothing could be more fiercely intolerant than the declarations of the Reformers in regard to the doctrines they had overthrown. To them the mass was in dead earnest "idolatry", properly punishable with death. Knox insisted on this constantly; and there were few things which exasperated him more than the suggestion that there might be no harm in leaving the Papists alone. (See the "History of the Reformation", ii., 265–6.) The principle of toleration had in fact no more place in the Calvinistic system than in the Papal; and if it be granted that the Protestants knew the Queen and the Catholic party would be glad to put them down as they had put down Catholicism, it is none the less certain that their motive was not mere self-preservation, but just such an innate lust for the suppression of heresy as actuated Catholic persecutors in that age. And, motive apart, the forcible suppression of Catholic worship was completely and relentlessly accomplished. Knox at one point triumphantly writes that the "Papists war so confounded that none within the Realme durst more avow the hearing or saying of Messe, then the theavis of Lyddesdaill durst avow thair stowth [stealth = stealing] in presence of ane upryght judge" (History, ii., 265). How much bloodshed this really represented it is impossible now to say. That it meant countless acts of gross tyranny is perfectly clear from the many references to prosecutions, finings, and banishments. But it is impossible to believe that in such a community as the Scotland of that day no worse outrages than these were inflicted on a downtrodden and detested sect by their triumphant enemies. A passage or two from the old "Diurnal of Occurrents" gives us some idea of the temper of the time. Under the date April 11th, 1574 (pp. 340–1) the Diarist tells how one Robert Drummond committed suicide by stabbing himself at the cross

when he was about to be burnt in the cheek for persisting in bigamy. He had first been made to do penance in the kirk; then, for continued contumacy, he had been banished; now, having returned and proved incorrigible, he was to be branded, when he suddenly took matters in his own hands and escaped his tormentors. And the Diarist incidentally explains how, after the second punishment, "the Magistratis, being movit with pittie, brocht him in the toun, becaus he had been ane lang servand, and *ane greit seikar and apprehendar of all preistis and papistis*". Of such unrecorded persecution there must have been an abundance; and another detail in the same record, overlooked or ignored by historians, points to an unascertainable, though doubtless small, number of random executions. In the same year is the entry (p. 341): "Wpoun the fourt day of Maij thair wes ane preist hangit in Glasgow, callit , for saying of mes." The name is either awanting or illegible in the manuscript, it appears; and it is evident that the writer did not think the matter one of much consequence. Such an entry is a sufficient disproof of the allegation that no Papist suffered death for his religion in Scotland, and of the generally accepted statement of Calderwood ("History of the Kirk of Scotland", iii., 196) that Ogilvie the Jesuit, hanged at Glasgow in 1615, was the first priest put to death in Scotland after the execution of Hamilton, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, hanged on his capture in 1571 as a Queen's-man too dangerous to be allowed to live. There appears to be no truth in the story (found in Leslie's History and in Dempster's "Historia Ecclesiastica", and cited in Robert Chambers' "Domestic Annals") that a priest named Black was stoned to death by an Edinburgh mob in 1562; Black having really been mysteriously killed on the night of Darnley's murder in 1567 (see Laing's Knox, ii., appendix, 592—5); but such an outrage would have been possible enough, and would have given small concern to the Protestant ministers. What is certain is that from the fall of Mary down to the end of the seventeenth century the Romanists left in Scotland could not indulge in the ceremonies of their Church, even in semi-private fashion in rural districts, without risk of instant prosecution, and, that they ran the most serious dangers when they secretly harbored

Catholic priests. Even Mary was compelled to prosecute and imprison the members of her own faith, being, indeed, menaced from the first in her own practice of it. When, on the first Sunday after her arrival, she attended mass in her private chapel at Holyrood, an attack was made on the building by a Protestant mob, a priest was ill-treated, and the interior would certainly have been wrecked but for the interference of Mary's brother Lord James Murray, afterwards Regent. Even by such an act as this, Murray, Protestant as he was, incurred the resentment of Knox, who approved of and probably encouraged the riot. (See his History, ii., 271.) Shortly after, at a meeting of the "Congregation", the clergy voted unanimously against allowing the Queen to exercise her own worship in her own household, and only the lay votes carried a contrary resolution (Burton, iv., 34). It is not here argued that the Protestant clergy had no reason to fear a return of Catholic ascendancy: the point is that their spirit was precisely that of the Catholics. It may indeed be claimed for the early Protestants, by those who will, that whereas the Catholics practised oppression while in power and professed principles of tolerance when in the minority, the Protestants were as pronounced in their intolerance when weak as when strong. (*Ibid.*, 119.) From the first they defied the Court. In March, 1562, "Sir" James Arthur, a priest, was prosecuted for solemnising baptisms and marriages "in the old abominable Papist manner"; and if he escaped punishment it was only by the determined exercise of the queen's "mercy", on which he threw himself (p. 56). Mary, of course, was too consummate a tactician not to save her fellow Catholics in the long run, but in May 1563 she had to permit the indictment of forty-eight Papists, including the Archbishop of St. Andrews and other eminent ecclesiastics, for celebrating mass and endeavoring to restore Popery in Paisley and Ayrshire; and of the number several had to go through the form of imprisonment at the Queen's pleasure. (*Ibid.*, 63.) The manner of the offences charged had involved no attack on the Protestant authorities, but consisted simply of the more or less secret performance of Catholic worship, just as the Covenanters of a later generation performed theirs. In 1565, again, we find a priest, "Sir" John Carvet, seized for saying mass, and pilloried and pelted with eggs on

two successive days; being apparently only saved from lynching at the hands of a riotous mob on the second day by the interference of the town guard. A royal letter, demanding the prosecution of the rioters, secured his release, but no such prosecution took place; and the bare idea of such a demand on the part of the Crown moved the clergy to wrathful activity. (Knox ii., 476; Burton, iv., 118.)

It cannot be too strongly insisted that the Protestant Church all along aimed at secular power. With the example of Geneva before their eyes, the Reformers held it their function to control the body politic and the body social alike; and only the self-interest of the aristocracy prevented their fully gaining their ends, just as it baulked them of the revenues of the fallen Church. The issue as to temporal power was effectively raised in 1561, over the attempt of the clergy to have their "Book of Discipline" made part of the law of the land. "The Protestant nobles and lairds", observes Burton (iv., 34), "were ready to accept all denunciations of Antichrist and Popish idolatry, nor did they hesitate at accepting the Calvinistic doctrines of the new faith just as Knox and his assistant ministers set them forth: they had, hence, at once adopted the Confession of Faith in Parliament. But the Book of Discipline affected practice as well as faith, and enforced certain stringent restraints to which it would have been inconvenient for some, who were the readiest to subscribe propositions of theological metaphysics, to submit." So that, though some approved, and even these under suspicion of hypocrisy, the lay notabilities resisted the clerical proposal; one telling Knox to "stand content—that Buke will nott be obteaned" (Burton, iv., 35; Hist. of Ref., ii., 297). For the time the preachers were left to impotent declamation; but in the summer of 1565, after the Carvet riot, they attempted more vigorous measures. Frustrations in other ways they had borne, but they would not endure that there should be any approach to toleration of Romish practices. Accordingly they resolved in General Assembly: "Imprimis, that the Papisticall and blasphemous masse, with all Papistrie and idolatrie of Paip's jurisdictione, be universallie suppressed and abolished throughout the haill realme, not only in the subjects, but in the Q. Majestie's awn persone, with punishment against all

persones that shall be deprehended to transgresse and offend the same; and that the sincere word of God and His true religion, now presently receaved, might be established, approven, and ratified throughout the whole realme, as well in the Queen's Majestie's owne persone as in the subjects, without any impediment, and that the people be astricted to resort upon the Sunday at least to the prayers and preaching of God's word, like as they were astricted before to the idolatrous masse; and thir heads to be provided be act of Parliament, with consent of the Estates and ratification of the Queen's Majestie" ("Booke of the Universall Kirk", p. 28; compare Burton, iv., 48). At the same time, besides requiring that provision should be made for the ministers, they demanded, what they had ordained in 1560, that no one should be permitted to teach in schools, colleges, or universities, or even in private, save such as were authorised by the Church; further, that Parliament should make adequate provision for the punishment of crime, "witchcraft, sorcerie, and inchantment" being among the offences singled out for special mention. There could not be a more explicit attempt on the part of a purely ecclesiastical body to lay down and control the laws of the land; and it was only the extreme uncertainty of the political situation at the moment—just before Mary's marriage with Darnley—that prevented any effective action being taken when the Queen diplomatically evaded the Assembly's demands (Burton, pp. 119—21).

Nor was the Protestant spirit of intolerance strong merely against the Church of Rome. The hatred of the Presbyterians to all other sects was tolerably impartial. As Tytler observes ("History of Scotland," Nimmo's ed., iii., 130), "it was the opinion of many of the leaders of the Reformation . . . . in Scotland that the hierarchy of England, as established under Elizabeth, was nearly as corrupt as Rome itself". And when in 1562 steps were taken to arrange a meeting between Mary and Elizabeth, the Scottish clergy, Knox heading them, bitterly opposed the plan, preferring, says Tytler (p. 161), "that their queen should remain an obstinate Papist, rather than take refuge in a religion which had as little ground in the word of God". How this temper took effect when the opportunity arose we shall see later. In the meantime the Reformers had almost no species of Dissent to trouble them. Calderwood much

later chronicles the arrival of a few Brownists (iv., pp. 1, 2) as an incident that came to practically nothing; and we may surmise that the English Anabaptists, from what they knew of Knox's sentiments in regard to them, would be very chary of seeking proselytes in the north. He thought some of their writings deserved punishment by death as blasphemous (Laing's Knox, v., 14); and his voluble treatise on Predestination, written by way of combatting their doctrines, stands in the front rank of the most rancorous controversy of the period. They shrank, poor men, from the theory that the Deity had foreordained the eternal perdition of the majority of his own creatures, and they sought to account for the moral confusion of the world, as more pretentious thinkers have done before and since, by the old suggestion of two supernatural principles: all which was as brimstone in the nostrils of a good Calvinist. But the creed of Geneva had not to contend with such aberrations of humane sentiment in Scotland. There the iron of inhuman dogma wholly entered the national soul, with what dark results of intellectual and social perversion it is now proposed to show.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

X.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

(II.)

We have seen how the class interest of the nobles had effected the main part of the Reformation, and how, their purpose served, they for the most part turned their backs on their preaching allies. The ultimate result of this course was the democratisation of the Kirk's polity, but the effect came about slowly. At the outset its members had no thought of abolishing the hierarchical system; and there can be little doubt that if the nobles had fairly shared their plunder with their auxiliaries Scotland would to-day have been as Episcopalian as England. The allowances originally proposed to be made to them varied from one hundred to three hundred merks a-year, a rate of income of which it was said that few Scotch lords had then as much in spare cash (Burton, iv., 41—2; Calderwood, ii., 172); and the clergy insisted that it was no more than they needed, arguing that, looking to the importance and dignity of a minister's services, provision ought to be made not only for his comfort but for the "education and up-setting [establishment] of his sons, and for his daughters being virtuously brought up and honestly doted",—that is, dowered (Burton, iv., p. 36). Such an arrangement would have made of the ministry a class with aristocratic habits and sympathies; among whom an order of bishops would be regarded as in every way desirable: as it was, the old hierarchical titles were not legally abolished in 1560; and the spirit of episcopacy was exemplified in the Kirk's institution of the new order of "superintendents" holding office during life, of whom Spottiswoode observes that "their power was episcopal; for they did elect and ordain ministers, they presided in synods, and directed all church censures, neither was any excommunication pronounced without their warrant" (ii., 167). It has been pretended that as these Superintendents were themselves chosen by the Church there was

nothing episcopal in their functions, but the essential point is that, as Buckle decisively points out in his citations ("History of Civilisation", iii., 99), they exercised a special authority, which the Assembly upheld. It was required "that punyschment suld be appointed for suche as dissobeyid or contemned the Superintendentes in thair functioun", (Knox ii., 161) and in 1562 "it was ordeaned, that if ministers be disobedient to superintendents in aniething belonging to edificatioun, that they must be subject to correctioun". (Calderwood, ii., 184). In the "Book of Discipline", indeed, it is also provided that the Superintendent "must be subjected to the censur and correctioun of the Ministeris and Elderis . . . . of the hoill Province", (Knox ii., 20); but for obvious reasons that stipulation did not prevent the superintendent from being in actual fact a person in authority. Such an arrangement was the more natural because a considerable number of the new ministers had been inferior clergy in the old Church. (Burton, iv., 328). But as years passed and the ruling class made no better provision for the ministry, there naturally arose a temper more and more averse to a system which created within the church a small semi-aristocratic class. In 1567, after Mary's forced abdication and during her incarceration at Lochleven, matters seemed to come to a definite issue. The clergy invited to their Assembly, as lay coadjutors, the Protestant landholders in general, calling on them to co-operate in the task of securing to the Church its proper patrimony, and some eighty of the "most notorious impropriators of Church lands" actually attended and professed zeal in the cause ("Booke of the Universall Kirk," pp. 54–58; Burton, iv., 324); while the Parliament went so far as to draw up a statute ordaining that "the haill thriddis of the haill benefices of this Realme sall now instantlie, and in all tymes to cum, first be payit to the Ministeris of the Evangell of Jesus Christ and thair successouris." And even this purported to be but a temporary arrangement, holding good until "the Kirk come to the full possession of thair proper patrimonie, quhilk is the teindis" [tithes]; while an annotated draft suggests a restoration of the "hale patrimony", which would mean the temporalities of all kinds. (Burton, iv., 324–5; Acts of Parliament, iii., pp. 24 and 37.) The whole was a grim and impudent mockery

on the part of the nobles. It "bore no fruit, if we may except the historical conclusion, that the statesmen of the day were anxious to secure the co-operation of the clergy" (Burton, p. 325).

Why they should have been so anxious it is needless to inquire minutely: the substantial fact is that if the ruling classes ever found the support of the clergy useful, the clerical influence none the less was impotent as against the aristocratic. In one direction only did it play freely and irresistibly, namely, in the coloring and moulding of the ignorant and plastic popular mind; though, of course, where the superstition of the nobles chimed with that of clergy and people, there was unity of fanatical action, just as there had been union when the nobles' personal interests coincided with the progress of the new doctrines. Scottish history will be misunderstood at several conjunctures if this factor of the interested action of the nobility is not kept clearly in view. Just as the throne, alike under James V., his widow, and his daughter, had the nobility against it because of its wish to aggrandise the Catholic Church, so did Murray prejudice his position as Regent the moment he gave his fellow nobles cause to suspect that he wished to help the Protestant clergy from the confiscated revenues (Burton, iv., 358). Buckle seems to me to make far too much of the political power of the clergy when he declares (iii., 113) that "it was they who taught their countrymen to scrutinise, with a fearless eye, the policy of their rulers"; and he lapses into sheer extravagance[1] when he further announces that "It was they who pointed the finger of scorn at kings and nobles, and laid bare the hollowness of their pretensions". The clergy never showed regal and aristocratic pretensions to be hollow in any sense save one which simply substituted their own pretensions for those they challenged; and in point of fact there was as much popular criticism of the rulers by the populace in the old times as in the new. How much the political action of the ministry was an affair of declamation may be

[1] Such a criticism should not be advanced by a student of Scotch history without a counterbalancing acknowledgment of the excellent service Buckle has done in bringing the main factors of that history into luminous relief and reducing the whole to rational bases, besides making an important research in quarters almost entirely ignored by specialist historians. My own debt to him is great.

seen from their powerlessness to protect even their own class against Regent Morton. That Protestant ruler, who, powerful and unscrupulous as he was, could not in the long run preserve himself against the ferocious intriguing of the nobles hostile to him, declared that there would never be peace in Scotland until some ministers were hanged; and he did torture and hang one in 1572 ("Diurnal," pp. 262, 293), without thereby securing special order, it must be said. The political lot of the clergy under the Protestant Regencies of James's minority is a mere record of impotent resentment of contemptuous oppression. In 1572 the Privy Council compelled them to accept a systematic establishment of the whole set of superior ecclesiastical offices under the old titles, it being provided that the names, titles, and dioceses of archbishops and bishops were to "stand and continue in time coming as they did before the reformation of religion", while the dignities of the abolished monastic system were also to be preserved by way of maintaining "the ecclesiastical Estate in Parliament" (Calderwood, iii., 173; Burton, v., 74—77). What Knox thought of this arrangement as such is not quite clear, but the truth seems to be that he was not anti-episcopalian at heart; and though he had a quarrel of some duration with Murray, he does not appear ever to have protested against Murray's retention of the Priorship of St. Andrews. In August of 1572 we find him subscribing "with my dead hand but glaid heart, praising God", the official ratification of a certain sermon preached before the regent; and this below the signature of "J. Sanct Androis"—a circumstance which Dr. McCrie does not mention in his account of the matter ("Life," p. 292. Compare Burton, v., 80). Nor did the populace show any presbyterian zeal against the arrangement; their comment taking the shape of one of those nicknames, their talent for which has been noted —and inherited—by Carlyle. The true purpose of the re-establishment of the hierarchy was to retain ecclesiastical funds in the hands of the landowners by a new device, the new bishops being simply the tools of the ruling nobles, and their function that of drawing revenues the greater part of which they surrendered to their patrons. On perceiving which, the popular mind classed them with the domestic invention of the "tulchan"—the stuffed figure of a calf which in the husbandry of those days it

was customary to place beside a cow at milking time to induce her to give her milk freely. The "tulchan bishops" are perhaps the most happily nicknamed body in history, and the popular feeling against them apparently went little further than the nickname.

If the Kirk could be defrauded thus under the Regencies of Lennox and Mar, while the sorely tried country was being convulsed by fresh invasions and a miserable civil war, it was not likely to manage much better under the iron rule of the Earl of Morton when quiet had been restored. Morton "had the address to persuade the Presbyterian clergy that it would be the best thing for their interest to resign at once into his hands the thirds of the benefices which had been granted for their support. . . . Their collectors, he said, were often in arrear; but his object would be to make the stipend local, and payable in each parish where they served. . . . The moment Morton became possessed of the thirds, his scheme of spoliation was unmasked. The course he followed was to appoint two, three, or even or four churches to one minister, who was bound to preach in them by turns; and at the same time he placed in every parish a reader whose duty was to officiate in the minister's absence, and to whom a miserable pittance of twenty or forty pounds Scots was assigned. Having thus allotted to the Church the smallest possible sum, he seized the overplus for himself; and when the clergy . . . . petitioned to be reinstated in their property . . . . they were at first met with many delays, and at last peremptorily told that the appointment of the stipends ought properly to belong to the regent and council" (Tytler, iv., 2; see also Spottiswoode, iii., 195–6). Instead of the people being now more democratically impatient of tyranny than in the past, they were positively oppressed by Morton in a way they never had been under their kings. He exacted fines in all directions from those who had been on the other side in the civil war, and the circuit courts, under his administration, "became little else than parts of a system of legal machinery invented to overawe and plunder all classes of the community. To supply them with victims he kept in pay a numerous body of informers, whose business it was to discover offences. . . . Ground was found for every species of prosecution; against merchants for transporting coin out of the realm,

against Protestants for transgressing the statute by eating flesh in Lent, against the poorer artisans or laborers for the mere remaining in a town or city which was occupied by the queen's forces. As to those whose only offence was to be rich, their case was the worst of all; for to have a full purse, and 'thole' [undergo] a heavy fine to the regent, were become synonymous terms" (Tytler, iv., 3). Against this tyranny by a Protestant noble, one of the pillars of the Reformation, the clergy could not and did not help the people. Their comparatively efficient criticism of the ruling powers only began under the weak and ignoble rule of James VI., when the throne was in its old position of conflict with the baronage.

Such was the tenor of ecclesiastical history in Scotland from the Reformation till after the death of Knox; and for us who study the influence of the Kirk as a political and social institution the question arises, What had it done thus far for the nation? Did it improve men's morals or spread light and knowledge, or further justice, or increase liberty, or raise the people, or in any way specially promote civilisation? The answer of the impartial historian must be that it had done none of these things. Taking its rise in sectarian hatred, and finding its life in persecution, it could not vindicate justice, or consecrate liberty; and, making neither for freedom nor tolerance, it could not be said to advance morality. The one thing that can be claimed for it thus far is that its influence was directed against "immorality" in the clerical sense—that is, against unlegalised intercourse between the sexes. When a leading reformer was found to have broken his marriage vow his brethren promptly expelled him (Burton, iv., 90); but of any inculcation of a high general morality their teachings show no trace. It is the bare truth to say that in an age of lawlessness and crime they never protested against lawless violence save when it was used against themselves or their party. Men like Knox, not personally inclined to acts of outrage, availed themselves without scruple of the aid of the most depraved criminals.[1] The murderers of

[1] The suspected complicity of Wishart the martyr in the English plot to assassinate Beaton being still insufficiently proved, I offer no statement on the question here. The charge, however, must be kept in view. Compare Tyler, iii., 365 *et seq.*, and Burton, iii., 256–261. As the evidence stands, there is clear ground for suspicion against

Cardinal Beaton, with whom he threw in his lot in 1546, were admittedly a set of grossly licentious ruffians (Burton, iii., 263). Of one of them the clerical historian Robertson has declared that he was "the most corrupt man of his age", a description accepted by Burton, with the remark that it is "an expression condensing within it a terrible mass of criminality" (p. 268); while Knox himself (History, i., 23) afterwards spoke of others of the gang as having become "enemies of Christ Jesus and to all vertew" —which may mean either that after murdering Beaton they cooled in their zeal for Protestantism, or that their later lives were in keeping with that beginning. It proves Knox's entire failure to rise above the ethics of his time that he justified the acts of such men without hesitation when they happened to meet his own wishes. He was even more lawless than his lay contemporaries, not less so. When a layman like Lyndsay could say of the Beaton murder that

> "Although the loon was weill away,
> The deed was foully done,"

Knox had no regret or scruple whatever. The Rev. Dr. Crichton feels constrained to urge (McCrie's "Life", p. xxxv.) that "the arguments of Knox, drawn from heathen antiquity, to palliate the assassination of Cardinal Beatoun, the ill-timed merriment he displays in relating that foul deed, and the countenance which his comments on that act were calculated to give in a fierce age, to promote murder or unrestrained vengeance—deserved, upon the whole, a severer reprehension, a more decided condemnation than they have found in the pages of his biographer". And the Beaton business was not a solitary case. Knox was always ready to condone and extol a murder which removed an enemy of his cause. Much indignation has been expressed by Presbyterian partisans at a statement of Tytler's (iii., 216, and appendix) that Knox was privy to the murder of David Rizzio. The charge is in point of fact quite reasonably supported;[1] but

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Wishart, and no satisfactory vindication. The argument relied on by the younger McCrie ("Sketches", p. 41, *note*) is childish.

[1] The case stands thus. The envoy Randolph wrote from Berwick to Elizabeth's minister Cecil in March, 1565–6, naming certain men, and alluding to others unnamed, as having been mixed up in the assassination; and to this letter, in the State Paper Office, was

if it were not, the outcry would still be ridiculous in the face of the unquestioned fact that Knox, in his history (i., 235), declares that "that pultron and vyle knave Davie *was justlie punished*", and complains that the titled assassins, Morton, Ruthven, and Lindsay, and the rest, "*for thare just act, and most worthy of all praise,* ar now unworthely left of thare brethren, and suffer the bitterness of banishement and exyle". Dr. McCrie ("Life," p. 253) concedes that "it is probable" Knox had "expressed his satisfaction" at the murder, but does not think fit to cite the above passage. One wants to know what great moral difference there is between pronouncing a given assassination, after the event, to have been a just act, worthy of all praise, and being privy to it beforehand? I am not making it an indictment against Knox that in an age of blood he gave his countenance to deeds of blood: I simply state the facts, and submit that he was doing nothing to purify his age.

It is claimed for the Reformers, with inveterate fatuity, that they introduced a higher moral tone when they denounced Mary for the killing of Darnley. There could be no more decisive test of the abject empiricism of the ethics of the eulogists and the eulogised. Here was the leading Reformer proclaiming the murder of Rizzio, guilty only of zeal for his mistress and his Church, to be a noble and laudable action, while the murder of the really vile Darnley, most scoundrelly of traitors and most filthy of adulterers, at the instance (real or presumed) of his outraged and nauseated wife, was execrated as the grossest of crimes. Morality becomes a farce in the face of such decisions. No rational reader of history will dispute for a moment that for such an act as the murder of her secretary any

found pinned a list of names, dated "Martii, 1565" [= 1566 by modern reckoning], in the hand of Cecil's clerk, with the endorsement, "Names of such as were consenting to the death of David". At the bottom of the list are the names of Knox and his colleague Craig, and there is subjoined a statement beginning: "All these were present at the death of Davy and privy thereunto". It is known that all those named were not present, and Tytler argues that the and = or, a perfectly probable construction. The ecclesiastics, with professional candor, found on the fact that Knox was *not* present, and declare that the construction *and=or* is monstrous. They ignore the fact that the literal construction would make Randolph a crazy gossip.

contemporary sovereign in Mary's place would have felt justified thrice over in beheading the assassins; and looking to the fact that Darnley was one of the framers of the plot, the execration of Mary resolves itself into saying that for a Queen to put her husband to death is the worst of crimes even when he has deserved death by her country's laws. The fact is that the current of popular feeling against Mary in Scotland was determined by the obvious folly of her course and not by its guilt. A mediæval populace never detested a guilty or perfidious sovereign who carried crime regally and remained master of the situation: witness the popular attitude towards Henry VIII. in England and towards his daughter Elizabeth. Mary Stewart, bringing to a desperately difficult situation one of the cleverest heads queen ever had, contrived to lose it more hopelessly than queen ever did; carrying her race's unwisdom in affection to the last stage of possibility. The crowd pardons everything in a ruler save weakness; though, as in Mary's case, it will readily fasten its outcry on a crime by way of justifying its wrath, once aroused. It has, of course, one moral code for kings and another for queens; but, even in that view, to pretend that the clamor raised in Scotland over the killing of Darnley meant pure moral horror at the taking of life—even at the taking of a husband's life—is to water history into a moral tale for the domestic hearth. In these matters the Protestant clergy were exactly on a par with their lay contemporaries alike in the barbarism of their ethics and their transparent personal bias; just as in the next reign they approved of the kidnapping of the King because the kidnappers were in the Protestant interest, while the king was supposed to lean to Catholicism. Their professed respect for law was even as that of the barons, an ingrained cant—for the sixteenth century had its cant like the nineteenth. And so far as Murray, the most reputable of the Protestant leaders, directed the administration of justice, there was even a retrogression from the standards of the time; the poor men concerned in the Darnley tragedy being zealously put to death, while their masters, notoriously the true criminals, went scot free.

In the matter of liberty there is really not the shadow of a case for the early Kirk. As we have seen, it had never entertained the principle of freedom, as such, for a

moment. From the first it sought to keep social life under its thumb, taking up the threads where the Church of Rome had dropped them. As early as 1563 we find the ecclesiastical Superintendent of Fife delating four women for witchcraft, and the Assembly calling on the civil power to act, the new Church thus early rivalling the old in sanguinary superstition ("Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies," Bannatyne Club ed., Pt. 1, p. 44). Then in 1567 a baronet who harbors an excommunicated man is ordered by the Assembly to send him forth (*Ibid.*, p. 98). Two years later the new clerical power takes upon it to assert an absolute censorship of the press and to order that the Edinburgh printer of the day, Thomas Bassandine, "is not to print without license of the supreme magistrate, and revising of such things as pertain to religion by some of the Kirk appointed to that purpose" (*Ibid.*, p. 126); and in 1574 a Committee of Assembly is appointed "to oversee all manner of books or works that shall be proposed to be printed, and to give their judgment thereupon if the same be allowed and approved by the law of God or not". New Protestant was but old priest writ large, and when the Protestant became a full-fledged Presbyter the correspondence was still more emphatic. We have seen how, at his outset, he laid his hand on popular amusements; and we shall see later the full effect of his censorship of the press and his general intellectual influence. Meanwhile, simultaneously with the definite establishment of the censorship, the Assembly made elaborate arrangements for the extinction of the love of beauty in the popular mind, with what results innumerable later comments on the squalor and uncleanliness of the Scottish common people can testify.

The reverend brethren thus express themselves on the subject of dress: "We thinke all kynd of brodering vnseimlie; all vagaries of velvett on gownes, hoses, or coat; and all superfluous and vaine cutting out, steiking with silks; all kynd of costlie sewing on passments, or sumptuous or large steiking with silks; all kynd of costly sewing or variant hews in sarks; all kynd of light and variant hewes in cloathing, as red, blew, yeallow, and sicklyke, *whilk declares the lightnes of the mynd*; all wearing of rings, bracelets, buttons of silver, gold, or other mettall; all kynd of superfluitie of cloath in makeing of hose; all

vsing of plaids in the Kirk be Reidars or Ministers . . .; all kynd of gowning, coating or doubliting, or breiches of velvett, satine, taffettie, or sicklyke; all costly gilting of whingers and knyves, or sicklyke; all silk hatts, or hatts of divers and light collours. But that their haill habite be of grave collour, as black russet, sad grey, sad browne, or serges, wirsett chamlet, growgrame-lytes, wirsett, or sicklike" (*Ibid.*, p. 335). And a "daring obligation", as Dr. Burton terms it, was undertaken by the brethren for "their wives to be subject to the same ordour". The significance of such a piece of sumptuary legislation goes further than the unspeakable catalogue of haberdashery it presents, further than its mere direct prohibitions. Such a list of forbidden embellishments is the work of men who were capable of carrying priestly inquisition into the minutiæ of life as no clergy had ever done before, and who were determined to get hold alike of the bodies and the souls of the multitude around them, crushing all individual instinct within their rigid scheme and deadening all the hues of life to their own joyless monotone of asceticism.

This was in 1573, and after the final fall of Morton in 1581 the Church year by year gained in social and even in political influence, though its constitution had still vicissitudes before it. In 1580, before Morton's arrest, the Assembly is found deciding that "the office of ane bishop, as it is now used and commonly taken within this realm, has no sure warrant, authority or good ground out of the scripture of God, but is brought in by folly and corruption, to the great overthrow of the kirk of God". The office accordingly was abolished, and the existing bishops were called on to surrender their functions, under pain of excommunication (Burton v., 201—2). Next came the "Second Book of Discipline", in which the Kirk's Constitution is placed on a definitely Presbyterian basis, that polity being now strenuously urged by a new school of ecclesiastics, at the head of whom was Alexander Melville, lately returned from the continent, and bringing with him the latest developments of Protestant ecclesiasticism, as Knox and others had brought the creed of Geneva. The Parliament, as before, refused to give legal force to the Church's scheme of discipline (*Ibid.*, 204) but the clergy adhered to it for themselves; and in the beginning of 1581

they obtained the boy king's signature to a document wordily repudiating "all kinds of Papistry", variously known as the First Covenant, the Second Confession of Faith (the First being that of 1560), the King's Confession, and the Negative Confession. With the King on their side, the clergy forcibly imposed this Covenant on the nation, a royal mandate being obtained empowering them to compel the signatures of their parishioners and to proceed against Recusants according to civil and church law. (*Ibid.*, 208.) Presbyterianism now began to take hold of the popular mind (p.210). The boy king remained a childish monarch at maturity; and only his passion for absolutism—a revulsion from the democratic teachings of his tutor George Buchanan—prevented the clergy from fully attaining the political power it sought. The episode known as the Raid of Ruthven, the kidnapping of the young King in 1582, had their full approbation as being the work of Protestant lords; but though James had many skirmishes with the Kirk, he judged it prudent to leave an influential clergyman instead of a noble to act as regent during his matrimonial expedition to Denmark in 1589; and in 1592 episcopacy was formally abolished and Presbyterianism established by Act of Parliament; this step being followed up in 1593 by an Act "for punishment of the contemners of the decreets and judicatories of the Kirk" (Burton, iv., 277—80). Thus in the period from 1560 to 1592, Scotland saw established, first a Protestant system with something like virtual episcopacy, under which Catholic hierarchical titles were still recognised; then a regular and legalised Protestant episcopacy; and then a system of pure Presbyterianism.

And how did the national life develop all the while? Dr. Burton, dating the strictly Presbyterian movement from a "religious revival" about 1580, sums up the moral history of the previous twenty years in the sentence: "On the present occasion, speaking of the mere social and moral influences set at work, a stranger might welcome the advent of efforts which, whether spiritually orthodox or not, yet had something in them tending to check or modify the spirit of ferocity, rapacity, and sensuality that was spreading moral desolation over the land" (v., 201). His own account of the state of things thirty years later still, tells us how far such a hypothetical hope had been ful-

filled. But first let us hear the old historian of the Kirk proclaiming at once the triumph of Presbyterian polity and the concurrent demoralisation, civil and religious, of the land: "The Kirk of Scotland was now come to her perfection, and the greatest puritie that ever she atteaned unto, both in doctrine and discipline, so that her beautie was admirable to forraine kirks. The assembleis of the sancts were never so glorious, nor profitable to everie one of the true members thereof, than in the beginning of this yeere" [1596] (Calderwood, v., 387). And in the Assembly of the spring of this very year, as reported by the same writer (p. 409), official complaint is made of "the commonn corruptions of all estats within this realme", as follows: "An universall coldnesse and decay of zeale in all estats, joyned with ignorance and contempt of the Word, ministrie, and sacraments; and where knowledge is, no sense or feeling. . . . . Superstitioun and idolatrie is interteaned, which uttereth itself in keeping of festivall dayes, bonefires, pilgrimages, singing of carrolls at Yuille. Great blasphemie of the holie name of God in all estats, with horrible banning and cursing in all their speeches. Profanation of the Sabboth, and speciallie in seed-tyme and harvest. . . . . Little care, reverence, and obedience of inferiours to their superiours, as siclyke of superiours in discharging of their duteis to their inferiours. . . . . A flood of bloodshed and deadlie feuds rising thereupon; an universall assisting of bloodsheds, for eluding of lawes. Adulteries, fornications, incests, unlawfull marriages, and divorcements . . . .; excessive drinking and waughting; gluttonie, which is no doubt the cause of the dearth and famine . . . .; Sacrilege in all estats, without anie conscience, growing continuallie more and more, to the utter undoing of the Kirk; . . . . cruel oppression of the poore tenents, whereby the whole commouns of the countrie are utterly wracked. . . . . A greate number of idle persons without lawfull calling, as pypers, fiddlers, songsters, sorners, plesents, strong beggars, living in harlotrie, and having their children unbaptized, without all kinde of repairing to the Word. . . . . Universall neglect of justice both in civil and criminal causes . . . .; no executioun of good lawes made against vices, or in favour of the kirk. In parliament sacrilegious persons, as abbots, pryours, dumbe bishops, voting in name of the kirk, contrare the

laws of the countrie. . . . . The sessioun [*i.e.*, the law courts] is charged with buying of pleyes [pleas] delaying of justice, and briberie." It is further stated, on p. 416, that "the land is overflowed with Atheisme and all kinds of vice, there being above foure hundreth parish kirks destituted of the ministrie of the Word, by and attour [*i.e.*, over and above] the kirks of Argile and the Iles." And it is proposed, by way of reforming the pastorate, "That suche as are light and wantoun in behaviour . . . . in speeche, in using light and profane companie, unlawfull gaming, as dancing, cairding [*i.e.*, card-playing], dyeing [dicing] and suche like . . . . be sharpelie and gravelie reproved by the presbyterie. . . . . That ministers being found swearers . . . . profainers of the Sabboth, drunkards, fighters, guiltie of all these, or anie of them, to be deposed *simpliciter*. . . . . That ministers given to unlawfull and uncompetent trades and occupations for filthie gaine, as holding of ostlareis [hostelries], taiking of ocker [usury] beside [against] conscience and good lawes, and bearing worldlie offices in noble and gentlemen's houses, merchandice and such like, buying of victualls, and keeping to dearth . . . . be admonished . . . . and if they continue therein, to be deposed" (pp. 404-5). Such were the concomitants of purity and perfection in the assemblies of the saints: such the palmy days of primeval Presbyterianism. At the end of the report of this Assembly's proceedings (p. 420) Calderwood writes: "Heere end all the sincere Assembleis Generall of the Kirk of Scotland, injoying the libertie of the Gospell under the free government of Christ", the statement having reference to the fact that in 1597 the political see-saw again brought about an establishment of episcopacy by the Estates. On the whole it might be thought that the intermission of the "sincere Assemblies" was a good thing. On their own showing they had coexisted not only with general demoralisation but with the most scandalous backwardness in those very matters of religion which the clergy professed to have specially at heart. And the situation is not hard to understand. The moral and intellectual elevation of any people is a complex process, in which the pursuit of the liberal arts and of commerce is a most important element. In a nation accustomed to violence there is no other way of attaining

peaceful civilisation. But instead of availing itself of these means of amelioration the Kirk was positively hostile to the first and cold towards the second. Its trusted spiritual weapons were those of fanatical exhortation, of monition, of ascetic denunciation: violence it opposed with violence, justifying its own deeds as wrought in the service of God, though accomplished with the weapons of carnal wickedness; and trampling the idea of religious tolerance under foot. Such a policy made men neither just nor humane, neither pure nor charitable; while all the special fruits of intense superstition were present in rank luxuriance. To that end the Kirk exercised a double influence, spreading fanaticism by direct methods on the one hand, and on the other crushing out all leanings towards intellectual light. A close study of Scottish history suggests that the nation's ecclesiastical experience has something to do with the growth of one species of intellectual capacity, but against this service, be it worth what it may, there is to be set a tremendous account of disservice to the nation's best interests. Before the Reformation Scotland had begun to build up a literature of poetry and drama; and the prosperity of Catholicism insured a certain effort towards art. True, the progress of the country under the Stewarts had been but slow. There are many reasons for accepting the conclusion of Dr. Burton (iii., 432, 438) that the country had been substantially richer before the War of Independence in the thirteenth century than it was in the middle of the sixteenth; the explanation being that the constant struggle with England on the one hand, and on the other the unending civil convulsions—arising out of the military power inevitably acquired by the nobles in a country constantly at war—were always draining the nation of material wealth; the poverty so induced making the nobles still more bent on plunder and ever more factious. In the strong though short reign of James the Fourth, however, the country had progressed remarkably alike in wealth and in culture; and it was in the troubled reign of his son, which began in a long minority, that the Reformation movement began. The question is, then, whether that movement, as taking shape in the Protestant Kirk, tended to the nation's intellectual progress, putting the matter of wealth aside; and when we find that it absolutely made an end for a whole age of literature proper

and of every form of art, the question is pretty well answered in the negative.

Confining ourselves to the two reigns of the Fourth and Fifth Jameses, we have literature represented by the many-sided poet Dunbar and the satiric and dramatic poet Sir David Lyndsay, two names which will compare with any in English literature up to the same period, with the one exception of Chaucer. But Dunbar, if on the whole less important and permanent, is in his way not less unique and really not less powerful than Chaucer; so unique and so powerful that there is no Scottish lyric poet who can be named beside him down to the time of Burns; and on Lyndsay's chief dramatic work, the morality play of "The Thrie Estaitis", we have the verdict of Mr. Ward that in vigor and variety it "far exceeds any English effort of the same species", and is further "by far the most elaborate and powerful of all the mediæval Moralities" ("History of English Dramatic Literature", i., 70—71). Put beside these writers' works those of Bishop Gavin Douglas, the translator of the Æneid, and the poems attributed to James V., and it becomes clear that Scotland was at the beginning of the sixteenth century far on the way to the possession of a literature at once brilliant and popular—the surest manifestation of an upward tendency in civilisation. A people with such a literature promised to become enlightened, artistic, and free from superstition. What the rise of the Protestant Kirk made them was the direct antithesis of all these.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

XI.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

(III.)

Bloody civil strife is always injurious to culture; and in 1560 the impulse given by Dunbar, Douglas, and Lyndsay, was certainly not obviously bearing fruit. But it was the work of the Kirk that instead of a reaction towards culture the whole back-swing of the nation's mind was substantially towards an arid fanaticism. The inner spirit of the new movement was hostile to literature and art as such. I say this advisedly, with full recognition of all that can be said as to the learning of a few of the first Reformers, and of men like Andrew Melville in the generation immediately following. The essence of living literature, living thought, living science, and living art, is the free play of the mind in all these various directions, and to the Reformers the idea of giving free play to the mind in any direction whatever was rank profanity. Melville might indeed discuss the classics with a scholar's gusto, and, basing himself on the new scholastic infallibilism of the Bible, might boldly challenge in the schools the supremacy of Aristotle; but here even his intelligenc set bounds to its critical action; and while he could r but have some personal influence for light, if not for sw ness, his power was fatally greater in the narrow s of doctrine than in the broad sphere of knowledg best, his culture had no help for the common peop' very praise given him for his services in furth classical movement in Scotland is decisive as ' than failure to promote the national litera' one hand an imitative, insincere, academic cl' other a vulgarised Calvinism—such was th' of the Reformation for Scotland. The cl' hold of life at all; the Calvinism bligh' of contact. A moral code arbitrarily was made to apply to every species

the result of finding evil in nearly everything men found pleasure in doing. Much has been said in praise of the scheme of the universities and schools projected by Knox and his colleagues (see Knox, ii., 213, *et seq.*), and it may freely be conceded that if the avarice and barbarism of the land-owning class had allowed that scheme to be carried out, some beneficial spread of knowledge might have resulted. But such a result could only have accrued by indirect means, not at all by reason of the kind of policy the kirk would have pursued in education. The typical learned Presbyterian of the age was Andrew Melville, in whom the most copious scholarship bore little save the Dead Sea fruit of factitious polemics. Knox himself has left positively nothing of permanent human value save his vivid record of the movement in which he bore part. And when we set beside this negative indictment, this destitution of healthful teaching, the positive performance of the Kirk in the way of sowing superstition and deepening mental darkness, it is hard to see what room there is left for crediting it with any service to national progress.

Presbyterian partisans, hard pressed to vindicate their ancestors on the subject of witch-burning, take the line of asserting that the witchcraft mania was an inheritance from Romanism. The ruse is puerile. The Reformers would have made short work of a colleague who refused to see that the exhortation to witch-killing and the authority for the belief in sorcery came from Holy Writ. What historically concerns us here to-day is that whereas in Catholic times there was no witch-burning in Scotland, the Protestant clergy were as zealous in that walk as they were in denouncing Popery and sexual license. The first legal enactment against witchcraft in Scottish history is the Act of the Protestant Parliament of 1563, in which the penalty of death is enacted "alsweill . . . aganis the usar, abusar, as the seikar of the response or consultatioun" (Acts, ii., 539); this being one of the few things in which the Estates conformed to the wishes of Knox (Burton, iv., 72). As we have seen (*ante*, p. 154), the clergy at once sought to give effect to the new statute. It is difficult, however, to trace their achievements closely. Pitcairn ("Criminal Trials in Scotland", I., part ii., p. 49) speaks of the case of Bessie Dunlop in 1576 as one of the earliest witchcraft trials of which detailed record remains; the only previous case in

his compilation, I think (save one in which a woman was only banished), being that of Janet Boyman in 1572 (*Ibid.*, p. 38). I find in his collection accounts of fifty-seven prosecutions for witchcraft in all, the accused being burned in nineteen cases and beheaded in three. But he notes (iii., 597) that during the reign of James VI. "hundreds of helpless creatures were destroyed under form of law" on the charge of witchcraft; "for those who were tried before the High Court of Justiciary bore a very small proportion to the very great numbers who were tried and condemned by the Lords of Regalities, Baron Bailies, and by the Royal Commissioners. A very striking fact mentioned by Baron Hume in his valuable Commentaries [ref. to Hume on Punishment for Crimes, ii., 559] may be here briefly noted, that no fewer than *fourteen* Commissions for Trial of Witches were granted [*note:* by the Lords of Privy Council] for different quarters of the country, *in one sederunt*, of the 7th of November, 1661; which year seems to have been the most fertile period of this sort of accusation." That is to say, the mania reached its highest point in Scotland one hundred years after the Reformation, the superstition having steadily intensified from the time of Knox, down through the historic Covenanting period under Charles I., when the nation became most thoroughly Presbyterian and devout.

The influence of the clergy to this end, implied in the main facts, is made clear by the details collected by Pitcairn in regard to trials for witchcraft. "There was generally in all cases of this nature," he writes (I., Pt. ii., p. 49), "a previous Precognition [*i.e.*, examination] taken before the Privy Council, most frequently after repeated examinations before the Kirk Session or the Presbytery. . . . . Such inquisitions generally proceeded upon a Special Commission issued by the Privy Council; when the evidence of neighbors was taken down, whose lamentable ignorance and superstitious fears would magnify into Sorcery and Witchcraft the simplest actions of the life of the suspected Witch." It is unnecessary here to go into any description of the ghastly mediæval mania in question. The case of Bessie Dunlop is typical, it being perfectly evident from the records that that poor woman became insane after childbirth, and that her illusions were taken as a reason for burning her. Pitcairn's account of the manner

of witch-worrying in Puritan Scotland, however, has present importance. "Solitary confinement," he goes on, "cold and famine, extreme thirst, the want of sleep, and the privation of all the comforts, even the commonest necessaries of life, the desertion of their affrighted relations and friends, added to the cruellest tortures, generally induced them at length, weary of life, to make their 'Confession' as it was called. One of the most powerful incentives to 'Confession' was systematically to deprive the suspected witch of the refreshment of her natural rest and sleep; and the cruellest means were often resorted to, to accomplish this heinous purpose. Even the indulgence of lying in a reclining posture on their handful of straw was frequently denied them. This engine of inhuman oppression was perhaps more effectual in extorting confessions than the actual application of the torture or *question* itself. Iron collars, or 'witches' bridles', are still preserved in various parts of Scotland which had formerly been used for such iniquitous purposes. These instruments were so constructed, that by means of a hoop which passed over the head, a piece of iron, having four points or prongs, was forcibly thrust into the mouth, two of these being directed to the tongue and palate, the others pointing outward to each cheek. This infernal machine was secured by a padlock. At the back of the collar was fixed a ring by which to attach the witch to a staple in the wall of her cell. Thus equipped, and night and day 'waked' and watched by some *skilful* person appointed by her inquisitors, the unhappy creature, after a few days of such discipline, maddened by the misery of her forlorn and helpless state, would be rendered fit for 'confessing' anything, in order to be rid of the dregs of her wretched life. At intervals, fresh examinations took place, and these were repeated from time to time, until her 'contumacy', as it was termed, was subdued. The Clergy and Kirk Sessions appear to have been the unwearied instruments of 'purging the land of witchcraft'; and to them, in the first instance, all such complaints and informations were made."

As regards the practice of judicial torture, it is clear that the clergy were assiduous in that insanest of all forms of cruelty the world has seen. Tytler notes (iv., 231) that when the Jesuit Morton was captured in 1595, "the ministers of the Kirk insisted that this unhappy person should

be subject to the torture of the boots, as the only means of obtaining a full confession"; and we know from Pitcairn that the victims of the witch mania were tortured in the presence of ministers, who signed the reports. Some of the refinements of atrocity achieved in the pursuit will compare not ineffectively with the choicest exploits of the Holy Inquisition; witness the case of Alison Balfour, who was tortured in the "caschielawis" for forty-eight hours on end, during part of which time her aged husband, her eldest son, and her little daughter, aged seven, were all tortured before her, not as being themselves guilty, but simply in order to extort her confession. That being obtained, she was loosed, whereupon she at once revoked the statement wrung from her (Pitcairn, I., part ii., p. 375). Two ministers assisted at her execution. The superstition, of course, soon pervaded all classes, King James being one of the devoutest believers; and in time the magistrates became as zealous as the clergy in destroying the wretched women who came under the insensate suspicion of the populace. Here is one contemporary piece of narrative, a memorandum by Thomas, Earl of Haddington, in his Minutes of the Privy Council Proceedings, under date December 1st, 1608 (Haddington MSS. A. 4, 22, Advocates' Library, quoted by Pitcairn, iii., 597): "The Erle of Mar declairit to the Counsall that sum wemen were tane in Broichtoun" [before the Baron Baillie of the Regality of Broughton, near Edinburgh, Pitcairn explains] "as Witches; and being put to ane Assyse and convict, albeit thay perseverit constant in thair denyell to the end, yit thay wer burnit quick, efter sic ane crewell manner, that sum of thame deit in despair, renunceand and blaspheamand; and otheris, half brunt, brak out of the fire, and wes cast in quick in it agane, quhill thay wer brunt to the deid." Burning "quick" [*i.e.*, alive] was a late development, the witch having usually been "wirreit" or strangled before being burned in the early days. The people seem to have passed from cruelty to cruelty precisely as they became more and more fanatical, more and more devoted to their Church, till after many generations the slow spread of humane science began to counteract the ravages of superstition; the clergy, as we shall see, resisting reason and humanity to the last. This is the most salient feature in the mental life of the Scottish people for a century after

the Reformation as contrasted with their life before it—this shifting of the balance of superstition from the mainly absurd accessories of Catholicism to the deadly belief in diabolic influences. Hallam has flatly declared ("Literature of Europe," part 1, c. iv., sec. 61) that the theology of Luther was no more acceptable to reason than the theology he assailed: he might similarly have said that in Scotland the Reformation, on the intellectual side, meant for the people the replacement of folly by frenzy, of delusion by mania, of twilight by darkness—a darkness which its few lights of scholarship only serve to make more visible in the retrospect. In the essential mattters of social brotherhood and beneficence I can detect no gain from the theological change in Scottish history. When in 1569 famine and pestilence visited the harassed land, the new cultus bore no fruit in pity or human kindness. "The public policy was directed rather to the preservation of the untainted than to the recovery of the sick. In other words, selfishness ruled the day. The inhumanity towards the humbler classes was dreadful. Well might *Maister Gilbert Skeyne, Doctor in Medicine*, remark in his little tract on the pest, now printed in Edinburgh: 'Every ane is become sae detestable to other (whilk is to be lamentit), and specially the puir in the sight of the rich, as gif they were not equal with them touching their creation, but rather without saul or spirit, as beests degenerate fra mankind!' This worthy mediciner tells us, indeed, that he was partly moved to publish his book by 'seeand the puir in Christ inlaik [perish] without assistance or support in body, all men detestand aspection, speech, or communication with them'" (Chambers' "Domestic Annals of Scotland", i., 52—53). Here the new religion failed, on test, to inspire brotherly compassion, about as utterly as any pagan creed ever did; and its doctrine of witchcraft wrought directly and enormously for the searing of humane feeling. "Towards those who came under the suspicion of diabolical dealing there was no pity left in the human heart. . . . . Where the suspicion alighted it carried belief with it, so as to render this chapter in the history of human wrongs perhaps the very darkest and saddest of them all" (Burton, vii., 115). Such is the feeling of the latest and most temperate historian of Scotland, contemplating the condition of his country as its religious "re-

formation" determined it for a hundred years. It is for those who represent the ecclesiastical change as an immense amelioration of the national life, moral and material, to weigh against their theological gains the immortal infamy of that awful murder roll.

The history of the Kirk after the Presbyterian climax of 1592 is to the full as chequered as that of the generation before. So soon afterwards as 1597 the Estates at the wish of the king passed an Act once more providing that any pastors or ministers on whom the king should confer the office and title of bishop or abbot, or any similar distinction, should sit and vote in Parliament freely as of old (Acts, iv., 130; Burton, v., 314). This has been so often represented as a tyrannous interference with the Kirk's internal affairs that it may be well to state plainly how matters really stood. The clergy were as far as could well be conceived from desiring merely to be left alone in their spiritual functions. The Second Book of Discipline (of 1581) had expressly stipulated that while the civil power had no right to interfere in Church management, beyond "commanding the spiritual to exercise and do their office according to the Word of God", on the other hand "the spiritual rulers should require the Christian magistrate to minister justice and punish vice, and to maintain the liberty and quietness of the Kirk within their bounds" (Burton, v., 203). Thus as Burton comments, "the State could give no effective orders to the Church, but the Church could order the State to give material effect to its rules and punishments". The State did not grant the modest demand, but such was the clerical scheme. Again we find Row ("History of the Kirk," Wodrow Society's ed., p. 184), representing the clergy in 1597 as perceiving that "plotts were laid down for the alteration of religion or the bringing in of *liberty of conscience at the least.*" When, on the contrary, the Estates re-established episcopacy in 1597, they did nothing to give the bishops any spiritual jurisdiction in the Church (Burton, p. 315). Some juggling took place in the Assemblies, in which bribery seems to have played a part, by way of getting the ministers to accept the situation; and on this being partially secured in 1600, two or three bishops were created (Calderwood, vi., 96; Spottiswoode, iii., 82). A strong spirit of time-serving had become conspicuous among the ignorant and ill-paid clergy;

the king's party in the 1598 Assembly being described by Calderwood, their spiritual brother, as "a sad, subservient rabble", led by a "drunken Orkney asse" (v., 695). Financial or fanatical self-interest was indeed the one political light the clergy possessed;[1] and accordingly when, in 1600, the crazy Gowrie Conspiracy to assassinate James made its futile sputter, the high Presbyterian section almost to a man championed the cause of the would-be assassins, unjustly enough, for the simple reason that the house of Gowrie was known to be strongly Presbyterian, while James was at least Episcopalian and his wife was Catholic.

About this time, however, the fortunes of the Puritan party began to sink very low. There is clear reason to conclude that it was only in contrast with the personal folly and weakness of James that they had been politically influential; and when in 1603 James acceded to the throne of England, and Scotch affairs were attended to for him by the Privy Council, consisting of nobles now no longer in conflict with the crown, the clergy, as of old, went quickly to the wall before the compact force of the aristocracy. All along, the northern districts, of which Aberdeen may be termed the capital, had been mainly royalist; standing for Catholicism in Mary's time and for Episcopalianism in James's; the power of the Melville party being chiefly confined to the south, the west, and Fifeshire. To the people of the northern districts the Puritan party were "the popes of Edinburgh" (Burton, v., 431). Accordingly when, in 1605, the aristocratic party gainsaid "the popes" on the question of the king's relation to the Church, there was a singular collapse on the clerical side. The battle, says Burton (v., 433), "was fought on the question whether General Assemblies belonged to the Crown, and were called and adjourned in the king's name, or were bodies acting in self-centred independence". "This question," he adds, "oddly enough, is not yet settled, and is evaded by a subterfuge so abundantly ridiculous as to be a standing butt for the jests of

[1] On this head I may cite the judgment of Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson in his essay on "Knox in his Relation to Women", reprinted in his "Familiar Studies of Men and Books". That admirable writer's standpoint is different from mine, but he is explicit as to the political benightedness of the Reformation clergy in Scotland, with the partial exception of Knox.

the profane"—the allusion being to the annual hocus-pocus between the Queen's Commissioner and the General Assembly. What happened was that the Melville party, more brave than prudent, called an Assembly at Aberdeen; which being forbidden by royal proclamation, there met only nine members, these of course being Melvillites. At a second "Assembly", also prohibited, they mustered nineteen; whereupon the Privy Council interfered, and imprisoned fourteen of them. In January, 1606, six of these, including John Welch, Knox's son-in-law, were brought to trial for treason and found guilty by a small majority of the jury; and in October, 1606, they were sentenced to banishment; while about the same time the unsubduable Melville, his nephew, and six others, were formally invited to the English Court to "treat" with his majesty. The end was that a Latin epigram of Melville's brought him into sharp collision with the king and council; he further assailing Episcopalianism in their presence with such audacity and vehemence that he was imprisoned in the Tower for four years, obtaining his liberty only on condition of leaving the country; while his companions were put under surveillance in different towns, English and Scotch. Melville, who was sixty-six years old at the time of his banishment, henceforward drops out of Scottish history, living mainly as a wandering scholar till his death at Sedan in 1622. "His death," remarks Dr. Burton (v., 439), "was almost unnoticed, and his fame faded away from all memories save those of the remnant of his own peculiar people. His name will not be found in the biographical dictionaries save in a few of recent times, for his fame in the present day is due to its resuscitation by a man who lived in the present generation" [*i.e.*, Dr. McCrie].

It thus appears that after a period of fanatical activity the Puritan movement positively subsided before the cold hostility of the Scots governing class, acting together with none of the vacillation and none of the childishness which characterised the personal policy of the king, though refusing to go as far as James required. Doubtless the flame of fanaticism had for the time gone far to exhaust itself. On the expulsion of Welch and his friends, the remnant of the Presbytery of Edinburgh professed to rejoice at the exhibition of his majesty's "just anger", declaring the offenders to be persons whom "the Kirk

here has at last been forced to cut off and excommunicate from her society" (Burton v., 436). So far did the reaction go that in 1606 the Estates passed yet another Act for the establishment of Episcopacy, this time professing to give the bishops not only their honors and dignities but their ancient revenues as well (Burton, v., 441; Acts iv., 281; Calderwood, vi., 496); and James, now thoroughly attached to the English system, set about getting the consent of the clergy to the installation of the bishops and archbishops as "constant moderators", or supervisors, of Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies. There was some fight left in the high Presbyterians; and a story is told of a conflict, involving a personal scuffle and some profanity, between the King's emissary Lord Scoon and the Synod of Perth in 1607—(see McCrie's "Sketches", p. 151, and references there). But James was able to obtain in 1610 the positive acceptance of the Act of 1606 by a General Assembly, "by dint of bribery and intimidation" as is explained by the true-blue Presbyterians of modern times. It does not appear to be realised by these loyal partisans that the very occurrence of such wholesale bribery as they allege is the most damning impeachment of the Kirk of their devotion. On their own showing, it was then two-thirds corrupt. The evidence is decisive. Sir James Balfour, the annalist (ii., 18) states that in 1606 the Earl of Dunbar, James's Commissioner and Scottish Lord Treasurer was notoriously understood to have "distributed amongst the most neiddey and clamorous of the ministrey to obtain ther voyces and suffrages, (or ells moue them to be neutralls) forty thousand merkes of money to facilitate the bussines intendit, and cause matters goe the smouthlier one;" the fact being made certain by the later discovery of Dunbar's accounts. And the clerical historian Row—who, says the younger McCrie, "may have somewhat exaggerated the sum"—states ("History of the Kirk", p. 289) that in buying the benefices of the bishops "out of the hands of the noblemen that had them, in buying votes at Assemblies, in defraying of all their other charges", the King "did employ (by the confession of such as were best acquainted with, and were actors in these businesses) above the summe of three hundreth thowsand pounds sterlin money—that is, sixe and thirtie hundreth thowsand pounds, or fiftie-four

hundreth thowsand merks Scots money". There can be no manner of doubt that Mr. Row exaggerated extensively, but the fact of the bribing remains; and there is no evidence of any special "intimidation" in the business. Money sufficed to procure a majority for episcopacy in the Glasgow Assembly of 1610; the distribution of golden angels being such as to secure the addition of "the angelical Assembly" to the list of Scotch historic nicknames. By this arrangement the Kirk positively agreed to have its annual Assembly regarded as called and constituted by the Crown; and to place its provincial synods under the permanent supervision of the bishops, who were further to have jurisdiction in matters formerly in the hands of presbyteries. The clergy indeed proposed that the bishops should be subject to the censure of the General Assembly, but when the Estates finally ratified the new arrangement in 1612 they simply ignored the stipulation. Here again the aristocratic party nominally arranged the Kirk's constitution to their own taste; but here again their invincible greed eventually brought about the frustration of their own scheme. The landowners were willing and even eager to retain episcopacy, enacting it again and again as we have seen; but nothing could induce them to provide properly for the class they wanted to establish. The new bishops in their degree had to endure precisely the same sort of financial hardships as the general clergy underwent formerly (see Burton, v., 444–461); and this circumstance, as we shall find, at length indirectly brought about a new and intenser development of Presbyterianism, a deeper and more enduring popular fanaticism.

All this while there was the reverse of a falling-off in the denunciation of Popery and the burning of witches; venal and fanatical ministers being alike "sound" and zealous on these heads. After the Gunpowder Plot, James's Protestantism was pretty well above suspicion, and that and other Romish scares gave the Scotch clergy abundant pretext for the inculcation of their first principle—the damnableness of Papistry. In 1600 the clergy called upon the king to prevent the French ambassador from having mass in his own house (Calderwood, vi., 27); an insanity which the British Solomon declined to commit. In 1615 came the execution of the Jesuit Ogilvie, already mentioned; an event in regard to which the pious Calderwood, with

characteristic Christian charity, notes (vii., 196) that "some interpreted this execution to have proceedit rather of a care to blesse the king's governement than of anie sincere hatred to the Popish religion. Some deemed that it was done to be a terrour to the sincerer sort of the ministrie not to decline the king's authoritie in anie caus whatsoever." Similarly the reverend historian, telling how three citizens of Edinburgh, who had been sentenced to death for entertaining priests, were reprieved at the scaffold, states (vii., 202) that "the people thought this forme of dealing rather mockerie than punishment". It is plain from whom "the people" would get the hint. The clergy were positively disgusted that a priest's execution should not be indisputably on the sole ground of his religion; and angry when the civil power had the clemency to spare at the last moment three doomed citizens whose sole crime was the harboring of the priests of their faith. It is worth noting on the other hand, by way of offset to official Catholic misdeeds, that when in 1599 the king was sued by the Rev. Robert Bruce for withheld stipend, and the king in person tried to browbeat the Court of Session to decide in his own favor, the president, Sir Alexander Seton, who was a Catholic, and as such denied the right to the practice of his worship by Bruce's sect, firmly resisted the royal interference, and joined in a judgment against the king (Tytler, iv., 270).

Expressly trained in religious hate, steeped in the darkest superstition, and withheld from all art and culture by the precept and example of a clergy who were confessedly coarse and ignorant where not intensely fanatical—held aside thus from civilisation on all hands, the Scottish people of all classes still naturally made slow progress in the matter of social order. The Earl of Haddington, whom we have seen exposing the cruelties of the witch mania, is found in 1617 declaring ("State Papers . . . . of Thomas, Earl of Melrose", published by Abbotsford Club, 1837, i., 273) that whereas his contemporaries could remember a time when disorder was universal, they had now arrived, under the glorious rule of James, at a condition of prosperity and good government unequalled anywhere; and he gives a frighful catalogue of notorious oppression, bloodshed, and crime, to bear out the first part of the statement. This Dr. Burton accepts (vi., 16) as a sub-

stantially accurate description of the condition of Scotland at the union of the Crowns. The picture would probably hold more precisely true of an earlier part of James's reign, some improvement having taken place before 1603; but on the other hand the Earl's account of matters in 1617, drawn up as it is in a letter from him to the king, is certainly untrustworthy in its courtly optimism. Progress was no doubt made after James's departure, under the rule of a vigorous executive, and of such statesmen as Binning himself; but lawlessness was still rife. Apart from the virtual barbarism of the Highlands and the Isles, we find it incidentally noticed by Calderwood (vii., 201) that highway robbery was practised round about Edinburgh in 1615 by "certaine bair and idle gentlemen" whom the common people called "Whilliwhaes"; and the fact is significant of the condition of the country in general. The same writer briefly tells (vii., 118) how in 1610 a batch of thirty-six pirates was brought to Edinburgh, and twenty-seven hanged *en masse* at Leith. It was with such recent memories, with such deeds going on around them, with such practice to show for their theological system, that the clergy and their more devout adherents waxed hysterical over the attempts of James, on his Scottish visit in 1617 and later, to impose on the Kirk the methods of worship in vogue in England. Rapine and murder, perennial violence and rank vice, might elicit their lamentations, but what touched them to the quick was the suggestion that certain ceremonies should be performed kneeling which had been usually performed sitting or standing; that Christmas should be kept as a holiday; and that baptism or communion might be gone through in private. James nevertheless contrived to get a majority in the Perth Assembly of 1618 for five such revolutionary changes; and though the minority predicted the most awful consequences, it does not appear that during the twenty years which elapsed before another Assembly was held there was any special alteration in the social life of the country, save in that progressive perversion of the national mind which made trivial formalities and empty shibboleths more and more the main subjects of intellectual exercise.

When James's fussy meddling with church ceremonies is dignified, as it is by Buckle (iii., 113), with the title of an attempt to "subvert the liberties of Scotland"—as if the

serious liberties of the people had ever yet been gained at all—it is natural that the further and more blundering interferences of his son Charles should be regarded as a still more desperate stretch of tyranny. But these popular notions, hastily adopted as they have been by men of high ability, are seen in the light of later research to be mostly empirical, and to be founded chiefly on clerical prejudice and rhetoric. Even the resistance to the ritualistic innovations of James had behind it the ever-vigorous force of the pecuniary interest of the baronage and landowners. An Act of 1617 (Acts, iv., 529) provided for the recovery of the minor temporalities formerly attaching to deaneries, canonries, and prebendaries; and this measure no doubt was felt by the nobles, as Dr. Burton suggests, to be a means towards the feathering of their own nests; but in the circumstances they could not well refuse the further Act (*Ibid.*, p. 531) appointing a Parliamentary commission to effect the better remuneration of ministers. This had practical results. "The minimum allowance [fixed by the commission] was equivalent to 500 merks, a sum estimated at £27 15s. 6d. sterling; the maximum reached 800 merks, estimated at £44 9s. sterling. As ecclesiastical lawyers and antiquaries find that the complaints of the Churchmen about their incomes were much modified after this commission began its work, there is the inference that it gave them some satisfaction. We may further infer, that to the extent to which the clergy were pleased and satisfied, the several greedy unscrupulous classes of men who had got possession of the tithes became discontented and hostile" (Burton vi., 45). How much force there is in this inference we shall better estimate when we have looked behind the preposterous assumption generally made by Scotchmen, fanatical and latitudinarian alike, that the *quasi*-religious rising in the reign of Charles I. was set in motion by the inspired rowdyism of a mythical apple-woman.

The popular notion of the rise of the Covenant movement is that when in 1637 Charles and Laud sent down to Scotland a liturgy offensive to the Presbyterianism of the country, an Edinburgh woman of the name of Jenny Geddes, who sold greengroceries, flung a stool at the head of a dean who read the new service, whereupon the whole country incontinently plunged into insurrection. The

historical facts, as now ascertained, are rather more complex; and the Jenny Geddes element is found to be apocryphal.

One of the first public acts of Charles I., after his accession in 1625, was the marrying of a Catholic princess; and his next act of importance, from the point of view of the Scotch, was a proclamation at the cross of Edinburgh, in the winter of the same year, to the effect that the new king formally revoked all grants by the Crown, and all appropriations to the Crown's prejudice, whether before or after his father's Act of Annexation—made on James's attaining majority in 1587. These Acts of Revocation by father and son were in similar terms, but there was the substantial difference that that of Charles included the tithes appropriated by the landowners, whereas James left the tithes alone (Burton, v., 270). This proclamation of Charles, says Burton (vi., 75), "professed to sweep into the royal treasury the whole of the vast ecclesiastical estates which had passed into the hands of the territorial potentates from the Reformation downwards. . . . He held that what the Crown had given the Crown could revoke. . . . This revocation swept up not only the grants made by the Crown, but the transactions, made in a countless variety of shapes, by which those in possession of Church revenues at the general breaking up, connived at their conversion into permanent estates to themselves or to relations, or to strangers who rendered something in return. . . . It was maintained, on the king's part, that the receivers of these revenues, which had belonged in permanence not to the men who drew them, but to the ecclesiastical offices to which they were attached, were illegal; and had this view been taken at the beginning, instead of standing over for upwards of sixty years, we, looking back upon it from the doctrines of the present day, must have pronounced it to be a correct view." This, as Sir James Balfour held in that generation ("Annals," ii., 128), was the real origin of the later Scottish insurrection, and consequently of the civil war; and Balfour effectively indicates the tone of the propertied classes when he declares that "whoeuer wer the contriuers of it deserue, they and all ther posterity, to be reputted by thir three kingdomes infamous and accursed for euer".

It was, of course, one thing to proclaim a revocation,

and another thing to carry it out. Charles, according to Bishop Burnet ("History of My Own Time", Book I., ed. 1838, p. 11), tried deep diplomacy, only to overreach himself. In order "that the two great families of Hamilton and Lennox might be good examples to the rest of the nation, he by a secret purchase, and with English money, bought the abbey of Aberbroth of the former, and the lordship of Glasgow of the latter, and gave these to the two archbishoprics. These lords made a show of zeal after a good bargain, and surrendered them to the king. He also purchased several estates of less value to the several sees; and all men who pretended to favor at court offered their church lands to sale at a low rate." This, however, was not sufficient, and ere long[1] Charles sent down the Earl of Nithsdale, a noble of Papist leanings, to attempt to bring the tithe-holders to submission; but the effort was fruitless, Nithsdale finding the service "desperate", and being, according to one story (see Burnet, as cited), in actual danger of his life. It is needless here to discuss the legality of the king's action or the nature of his motives. There was probably truth in his statement (Burton, vi., 79) that the teinds were rapaciously and brutally enforced by the lay impropriators, and had become "the cause of bloody oppressions, enmities, and of forced dependencies". But the certain and important matter is that, while an arrangement was ultimately made for the commutation of the tithes, the propertied classes cherished a grudge against the king for his interference, and a constant suspicion of further attempts (*Ibid.*, pp. 84, 225); and that, the purpose of the king and Laud having notoriously been to enrich the bishops and promote episcopacy, "the aristocracy and the more plebeian party in the Church were arrayed against the crown and the prelates" (p. 78).

[1] Burton (vi., 77) says, in 1628; but Mr. Gardiner ("History of England", vii., 278) holds that it cannot have been so late, and writes 1626. The latter date is that given by Laing ("History of Scotland", 2nd ed., iii., 91). But Burnet's narrative (as cited above) would give 1627.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

XII.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

(IV.)

NEXT came the permanent establishment of an impost in the nature of an income-tax (p. 85); and, the king persisting in enforcing the policy of Laud, there arose a general fear of a reversion to Romanism, complicated and intensified by the crowning consideration that all these acts of Charles were virtually attempts to subject the polity of Scotland to that of England. "The history of Scotland", as Burton observes (vi., 132), "will not be truly understood by anyone who fails to see that to force any English institution upon the people would be accepted as a gross national insult. This stage of political infatuation had been reached by the Book of Canons, of which Clarendon said: 'It was thought no other than a subjection to England, by receiving laws from thence, of which they were most jealous, and most passionately abhorred.'" Here then were at work the three forces of the interested enmity of the landowners to the church policy of Charles and Laud, which always menaced their revenues; the panic-fear that Laud was re-introducing Romanism; and the potent spirit of nationalism, fiercely jealous of the influence of the "auld enemy", England. Added to all this there was the impulsive force of the agitation against Charles's absolutism in England—a kind of influence which had before operated powerfully at the Reformation, when the natural hunger of the Scottish nobles for the Church's wealth was whetted and stimulated by the spectacle of the doings of Henry VIII. As for the offending liturgy in particular, its purport will be found carefully set forth in Burton's History; but it must be left to the zealots of ceremonial to explain how a tumult over such a matter can be held by rational people to be a serious vindication of "religious liberty". Nothing could be more ridiculously unworthy of a great cause than the indecent scuffle usually pointed to as the historic origin

of the rebellion. Shrewish clamor and stool-throwing by a number of ignorant and disorderly women of all classes is the precious fountain-head of the "religious liberty" of the Covenant, as clerical historians see the matter; and the canonised figure of the fabulous Jenny Geddes[1] fitly poses as the genius of the scene. Whether or not there was any truth in the contemporary theories that the riot had been pre-arranged and that some of the rioters were men in women's clothes; or whether the clergy were the instigators of "the she-zealots" in Edinburgh and elsewhere —for the "devouter sex", as a contemporary called them, showed fight in several places (Burton, pp. 153–4 and 204)—in any case the subsequent movement was a vastly more complex affair than the protest against a liturgy. That weak and blind obstinacy on one hand, and more or less foolish popular excitement on the other, should

[1] The Jenny Geddes story is a demonstrated myth; and, apart from that, the exhibition of the historic stool in Edinburgh is a sufficiently impudent absurdity. There is no contemporary trace whatever of any Jenny Geddes in the riot; and the story of her address to the Dean is obviously trumped up out of two narratives in which a "good Christian woman" or "she-zealot" is represented as having slapped in the face, either with her hand or her Bible, a gentleman who said "Amen" to the Dean's reading of the service, charging the offender with saying Mass at her ear. Compare the contemporary account printed in the Bannatyne Club's edition of Rothes' "Relation", p. 199, and the narrative of Gordon of Rothiemay ("History of Scots Affairs," Spalding Club, ed. I., 7). Kirkton, born about 1620, expressly says it was "ane unknown, obscure woman who first threw a stool" ("Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland", Sharpe's ed., p. 31). Wodrow, writing in 1705 ("Analecta", Maitland Club ed., i., 64) notes a "constant believed tradition" that the thrower of the "first stool" was a Mrs. Mean. The first historic trace of any Jenny Geddes is in 1660, when an Edinburgh greengrocer of that name uproariously burnt her trade-gear publicly in honor of the restoration of Charles II. (See Burton, vi., 151, *note*). If that personage is the heroine of the Covenant, the fact should be kept properly in view. And if tradition is to be founded on, we should not lose sight of the other tradition that on the Sunday before the historic riot Jenny Geddes had done public penance in the Kirk for fornication. (See Kirkpatrick Sharpe's note on Kirkton, pp. 31–2.)

Another constantly retailed figment is the story of John Knox's daughter having told King James that she would rather "kep" her husband's head in her apron than persuade him to accept the bishops. This fable, as always told by clerical writers, represents Knox's daughter as saying that her father had no sons. Yet these writers cannot have been unaware that Knox had two sons, one of whom became an English vicar (Dr. McCrie's "Life", p. 416).

thus turn the course of a nation's history, is an impressive enough reflection; but our business here is to trace in particular the effect of the Covenant movement on Scottish life, leaving the other historical issues alone.

First, then, the "Covenant" was a piece of policy in which, as regards its inception, religion had about as much share as in any other stroke of state at the time. It "took" brilliantly; but it was diplomacy that led fanaticism, not piety that ruled diplomacy. "The strength of the opposition," writes Burton of the situation late in 1637 (p. 160), "was still in its political element," though "common cause was made between the politicians and the clergy; and there was always enough about the grievances of the consciences of the serious to secure their co-operation" —this though many of the nobility were known profligates. For the rest, the Covenant was considerably more offensive than defensive, being in the main simply the old repudiation and execration of Popery prepared by the Protestants of the first generation. And, warlike action once begun, there was at least no more thought of allowing liberty of conscience to others than had been shown on the side of the King. Under the powerful organisation of the executive body known as "The Tables", "the parochial Committee saw that each adult member of the parish signed, or otherwise gave his adhesion to the Covenant. . . . . Over the districts where the organisation had the mastery, no one worth claiming as a partisan was permitted to evade the pledge. Those who would not yield had to seek refuge in the districts where the Cavaliers prevailed." "In Inverness the town's drummer or crier proclaimed the obligation of signing the Covenant, with the alternative of heavy penalties against all who were obstinate or slothful" (*Ib.*, p. 205; compare pp. 279–80, 287, and 355). So Burnet: "They forced all people to sign the Covenant" ("Own Times" Book I., p. 21). And the important Assembly of 1638 was packed in the anti-royalist interest:—"The Tables undertook the working of the elections so as to produce a thoroughly Covenanting Assembly" (Burton, vi., 225). There, however, as at the Reformation, the aristocratic interest was plenipotent; the lay leaders of the movement adroitly reviving an old Act of Assembly which provided that each presbytery should elect one lay member of Assembly as well as two clergymen, and that the royal

burghs should send lay commissioners in addition. The clergy vainly protested (pp. 225, 229). They "could not but see that this nominally rigid adherence to their standards was transferring them into the hands of new masters. They could not be blind to the reason why the office destined for men of a religious turn and serious walk in life was wanted for a haughty powerful nobility, many of them profligate livers. Among them, indeed, were men fighting their own personal battle for the preservation of the old ecclesiastical estates, which they believed to be in danger—all had a personal dislike of the bishops, as assuming a superiority over them. But it was in such men that the strength of the Assembly as a hostile declaration against the Court lay, and they prevailed in the elections" (pp. 225–6). And thus yet once again was Episcopacy abolished in Scotland, and a pure Presbyterianism set up.

For the war itself, the general fortune of that was indisputably the outcome, not at all of religious enthusiasm, but of the important fact that the peace of Westphalia had thrown idle a large number of trained Scots soldiers, and among others an extremely able general, David Leslie. It was the winding up of the Thirty Years' War that "threw loose the materials that were to revive into the civil wars of Britain" (Burton, p. 217). And the covenanting leaders —among whom, at first, was Montrose, it should be remembered—conducted their business much as did the other European campaigners of the period; offering to pay the powerful Marquis of Huntly's debts for him if he would join them (p. 216); and not even scrupling to seek aid from the Papist king of France (p. 288)—a proceeding perhaps about as easy to reconcile with patriotism as with religious sincerity. Again, when the "Covenanting" army under General Monro occupied Aberdeen in 1640, their conduct was tolerably like that of other European forces—the delating of sixty-five unwed mothers before the Covenanting church courts being one of the symptoms (p. 322). As for the dealings of the Covenanting nobility with those of their feudal enemies who were now at their mercy, these were precisely like the old civil wars, full of "limitless plunder, destruction, and bloodshed" (p. 323).

It was not for nothing, however, that such a movement, however fundamentally political and bound up with class interests, was associated with the profession of a religious

covenant and the cause of the popular church. Through all the cool generalship, the unscrupulous diplomacy, the military rapine and debauchery, the seed of fanaticism was being sown and ripened; growing up, indeed, in the breasts of reprobates and ruffians, as freely as in the merely ignorant and credulous populace. Dr. Burton, I think, goes too far when he says (p. 354) that "some thirty years before, the Scots were a people somewhat indifferent about religious matters"; but it is clear that from the time of the Covenant they became much more generally fanatical than ever before.

During the war the clergy were naturally at the highest pitch of fanatical excitement. The "Large Declaration" drawn up for Charles by Walter Balcanquall tells how the Covenanters for a time did homage at Edinburgh to a Mrs. Margaret Nicholson, who had raving fits which were regarded as inspired trances. "The multitude was made believe her words proceeded not from herself, but from God. Thence was that incredible concourse of all sorts of people—noblemen, gentlemen, ministers, women of all ranks and qualities—who watched or stayed by her day and night during the time of her pretended fits, and did admire her raptures and inspirations as coming from heaven. . . . So soon as she was ready to begin, the news of it was blown all the town over, and the house so thronged that thousands at every time could find no access. . . . Rolloc, her special favorite, . . . being desired sometimes by the spectators to pray with her, and speak to her, answered that he durst not do it, as being no good manners in him to speak while his Master was speaking in her" (Burton, vi., 277–8). Religious excitement of a more normal species was naturally abundant. It is extremely difficult to trace closely the interplay of the various influences through the Covenanting movement, but while we have seen that in its origin it was mainly political, it is clear that the clerical element was that which most tended to aggrandise itself. Once Charles was repelled, it was no part of the interest of the aristocracy to go further. Some king they must have. They ultimately realised, indeed, that, whether or not they had made a blunder in beginning, the game had gone out of their hands; and we must largely attribute to this the fact that on Charles' execution the Scottish nation decided for his son. Not that the

clergy were any more Republican or Cromwellian than the nobles: on the contrary, it seems certain that they remained as devoted to the abstract principle or sentiment of kingship as the nation had always done through its many rebellions and revolutions. The prominent minister, Robert Baillie, who had been a sufficiently zealous Covenanter, is found execrating the regicide. Mere clerical sympathy with the decapitated king's son, however, would never have floated the rising in his favor if the powerful classes had not been at least willing to see it take place. Of course the blind impulse of national sentiment again came into play; and a Covenanting army, of a curiously mixed quality, mustered for Charles II. against Cromwell, with the most disastrous results. Leslie was no longer the best general in Britain; and his clerical allies contrived that he should lead against the Ironsides not even the cream of his old troops. It is beyond doubt that, whether or not the preachers forced him to precipitate the battle of Dunbar, they had fatally weakened his army by expelling all the troops who did not satisfy clerical requirements in the matter of piety. Naturally, the men who had been trained in the Thirty Years' War in many cases fell below the standard. "Thus they drove away, as an astonished onlooker [Sir Edward Walker] tells us, four thousand men, and these, as old experienced soldiers, the best in their army" (Burton, vii., 15). The same onlooker describes them as "placing for the most part in command ministers' sons, clerks, and such other sanctified creatures, who hardly ever saw or heard of any sword but that of the Spirit" (p. 21)—which strictly agrees with Leslie's own account of his defeat (p. 26). If it were true that it was religion that made the movement against Charles I., it was certainly religion that lost Dunbar and Worcester.

As the civil war went on, the fanatics became if possible still more fanatical. The pretence of safeguarding their own liberties with which they had started was now played out; but they were as zealous in positive as in negative intolerance. Before the battle of Dunbar the prince was made to declare: "He doth now detest and abhor all Popery, superstition, and idolatry, together with Prelacy, *and all errors, heresy, schism, and profaneness; and resolves not to tolerate, much less allow of these in any part of his majesty's dominions*, but to oppose himself thereto and endeavour the

extirpation thereof to the utmost of his power" (*Ib.*, p. 19; compare p. 67). That is the essential note of the Covenant. The main reason why the Scotch clergy and Cromwell never made friends was simply his "damnable doctrine of toleration" (p. 31). To the devout Row ("Contin. of Blair's Autobiography, p. 335; cited by Buckle, iii., 195) he is "that old fox" even when death has struck him down; so little of brotherhood, not to speak of chivalry, was there in the Puritan sectarianism of the time. But nothing is more curious in the history of Scotland—or of England, for that matter—than the fashion in which the strong man, hedged by no regal divinity, but using the great engine of his own welding, his army, set his foot on all the forces with which the weak king could only meddle to his own undoing. A study of Cromwell's dealings with the Covenanters makes short work of the notion that the policy of Charles I. was an intolerable despotism. The things which the king tried in vain to do were trifles beside those which the Protector carried through with iron determination and utter completeness. The Estates of the Realm, that grim and turbulent senate, the ancient defier of kings and oligarchies, he absolutely extinguished. But "one important thing had yet to be done. The theologians who had kept Scotland in uproar for so many years had to be silenced as well as the politicians. The two opposing parties—the Resolutioners and the Remonstrants [*i.e.*, the royalists and their critics]—were girding their loins for a war of extermination. After a long contest, with much surrounding disturbance, the end would be that the majority would drive forth the minority. In July 1653 the General Assembly met in Edinburgh, each side charged with material for hot debate" (Burton, vii., 49). Whereupon, as Baillie narrates, a body of Cromwellian musketeers and troopers beset the church, and the reverend brethren were with all possible simplicity marched through the streets, escorted one mile beyond the town, and instructed that henceforth they "should not dare to meet any more above three in number." And they did not dare. The end of the movement of the Covenant was that Scotland was deprived of its Parliament, and the Kirk of its very right of assembly. In view of which consummation it becomes desirable that the hues of the customary rhetoric against the ecclesiastical and other tyranny of Charles should be

somehow harmonised with the colours of the adjoining picture. The prevailing anomaly is a trifle absurd, if we are to proceed on any more plausible principle than this, that the unpardonable sin on the part of a tyrant is failure.

But it was not to idleness that Cromwell relegated the clergy when he suppressed their Assembly. What they could do to thwart progress by methods of State they had pretty well done. In Episcopalian Aberdeen, before the Covenanting outbreak, there was "a society more learned and accomplished than Scotland had hitherto known" (Cosmo Innes's preface to *Fasti Aberdonenses*, published by Spalding Club, p. xli.); and its university, made famous in Europe by the learning of the "Aberdeen doctors", was quite the most important centre of light in the country. "One cannot," says Robert Chambers, "reflect without a pang on the wreck it was destined to sustain under the rude shocks imparted by a religious enthusiasm which regarded nothing but its own dogmas, and for these sacrificed everything. The university sustained a visitation from the Presbyterian Assembly of 1640, and was thenceforth much changed. 'The Assembly's errand', says Gordon of Rothiemay, 'was thoroughly done; these eminent divines of Aberdeen either dead, deposed, or banished; in whom fell more learning than was left in all Scotland beside at that time. Nor has that city, nor any city in Scotland, ever since seen so many learned divines and scholars at one time together as were immediately before this in Aberdeen. From that time forwards, learning began to be discountenanced. . . . . Learning was nicknamed human learning, and some ministers so far cried it down in their pulpits, as they were heard to say: *Down doctrine, and up Christ*'" ("Domestic Annals", ii., 121). Their most decisive work, however, was probably that done in ordinary course by the ordinary ecclesiastical machinery; the account of which by Buckle is well known to the general reader. Never was an inquisition more comprehensive, a tyranny more minute. A few pages of any of the old presbytery records will give a sufficiently clear idea of how the clergy occupied themselves throughout the country. Here are a few illustrations from the "Selections from the Registers of the Presbytery of Lanark", published by the Abbotsford Club:

1627. February. "Ordaines Wm. Weir, pyper, for playing

at Yuile at the gysing [masking] in Douglas, to be summoned with a lybellit summonds" (p. 5).

1633, September 5. "Mr. Thomas Ballentyne [a minister] censured for travailling and goeing abroad upone the *Saturdayes*, and is exhorted to mend that fault" (p. 9).

1646. September 3rd. "The qlk day compeires the Lady Glespen, and confessing shee said, if Montrose and his people were present, she would not be worse vsed than be our awine [by our own], is ordained to confesse her fault privatelie before the sessione—" (p. 53).

From the early pages of the "Extracts from the Presbytery Book of Strathbogie", published by the Spalding Club, I cull the following:

1636. July. "It is ordained that stockes shall be made for the punishment of stubborne and unruly delinquents" (p. 7).

September. "Margaret Fraser suspect of witchcraft, and having broken waird in Aberdene, is ordained to bring ane testimoniall of her bygone conversation, or otherwyse the receipters [receivers or entertainers] of the said Margaret to be punished" (26).

September. "Barbara Lowrie compeared also in sackcloth and confessed her adulterye with John Stewart. She was ordained to stand in the jogges and brankes [iron collar, etc.] till the congregation be satisfied, becaus she had no gear" [*i.e.* no money to pay a fine]. Stewart, who is also accused of an attempt at rape, is merely "ordained to sit in sackcloth till the people be satisfied, and to pay twenty markes penaltye" (p. 8).

In the same month it is reported that one George Gordoune had been cited before the session at Rynie for "prophaneing the Sabboth, by gathering grosers [gooseberries] in time of sermon" (p. 9).

September 29. "It is ordained that drinkers in tyme of divyne service shall be punished as fornicatours" (p. 10).

1637. March. "It was ordained that every brother should make intimation out of his pulpit, that none of their parishioners receipt Margaret Charles, who was lately parted with chylde in the parish of Dumbennand" (p. 14).

This sort of prying oppression was going on wholesale all over the country at the very time the attempt of Charles to impose a liturgy was being shrieked over as an act of tyranny. These—in addition to the constant prosecutions of witches—were but a few of the normal forms of ecclesiastical interference with liberty. The mere staying away from Church, not to speak of holding intercourse with

papists, was an offence constantly being proceeded against and often punished by the penalty of excommunication, which, where effectual, involved something like entire social ostracism. (Compare Strathbogie Extracts, pp. 15 and 42; "The Church and Churchyard of Ordiquhill", by Wm. Cramond, Banff, 1886, pp. 44, 47, 49, 50; and Extracts from Aberdeen Presbytery Records, Spalding Club, pp. 97, 102–3, 109, 139, 143.) In Aberdeen, in 1607, occasional residents abstaining from church attendance were sought to be expelled from the city (Presbytery Records, cited by Buckle, iii., 222). But there was nothing that the Presbyteries did not interfere with. They ordered heads of households to keep rods for the chastisement of children or servants using improper language (see extract in Buckle's notes, iii., 208); they censured boys and servants for Sabbath-breaking (*ib.*); they searched private houses during sermon time, besides scouring the streets, to find absentees (p. 209); they paid spies and secretly terrorised servants to give testimony against their masters (*ib.*); they passed censure for omission to salute a minister (p. 210); they imposed penalties for the employment of pipers at weddings (p. 258); they imprisoned wandering singers and forbade others to give them meat or drink (p. 259); they prohibited poor people from giving their children more than two or four godfathers and godmothers (p. 260); they caused women to be whipped (p. 262); they ordered merchants not to travel to Papist countries (p. 264); they caused it to be directed in all the Edinburgh pulpits that no women should be employed as waiters in taverns (*ib.*); they insisted that widows should either re-marry or go into service, and not live alone (*ib.*); they compelled families to break up (*ib.*); they rebuked those who travelled, or paid visits, or strolled in the fields or streets, or slept in the open air, on Sunday (pp. 265—6); they tried to prevent boys from swimming on any day (*ib.*); they compelled mothers to refuse shelter to their own sons when excommunicated (p. 278). During the wars, too, they carried to the most extraordinary lengths their aggressions against members of the aristocracy suspected of papistical or cavalier leanings. Of one case the Editor of the Lanark Records writes:—"The treatment of the Marquess and Marchioness of Douglas by the Presbytery of Lanark exhibits a system of ecclesiastical oppression almost without

parallel. They were compelled to profess their belief in the doctrines of a church of which they had never been members,—to join in its ordinances under pain of excommunication (then drawing with it the most serious civil consequences) and of being denounced to the ruling powers as malignants and enemies of their country. They were deprived of all control over the education of their children, —latterly even of their society . . . . ; and they were forced to receive into their family a nominee of the Presbytery; ostensibly as a chaplain, but truly as a spy on their proceedings. They were under the necessity of dismissing their confidential servants at the bidding of the Presbytery; and for a series of years were fain to cultivate its forbearance by the most abject and humiliating submissions." And "at the time when the Presbytery was most rigorous in its measures against the Marquess to compel his family's adherence to the Church, it was making repeated complaints against his interference with the consciences of his tenantry" (Preface, p. x.). In view of such proceedings, it is the less surprising that when the tables were turned at the Restoration, and Episcopacy was set up in a more complete form than ever before, the royalists trampled on the Presbyterians.

Scottish ecclesiastical history is popularly told so as to bring into high relief the persecutions under Charles II. and James II., leaving the immediately preceding period in the vague as one of general religious well-being. Certainly the Episcopalian persecution was infinitely the bloodier of the two. Apart from the perpetual torturing and burning of suspected witches, the Presbyterian zealots cannot be accused of carrying their tyranny, odious as it was, to the point of savage cruelty. Such a diabolical act as the drowning of eleven gipsy women in the Nor' Loch of Edinburgh in 1624 is doubtless to be set down in the dreary catalogue of the crimes of racial animosity. At all events, it was left to the Episcopal *régime* to carry sectarian hatred to the point of shooting, sabring, hanging, and drowning, men and women who persisted in following their own form of worship. From the point of view of the non-sectarian student, of course, the fact only constitutes one more historical proof that the establishment of any form of religion means oppression, to the extent of the power of the established sect to oppress. It will be

well, however, to keep in view the circumstances which determined the specially sanguinary character of the Episcopal persecutions. First let it be remembered that the Protestant laws had from the first prescribed the death penalty against all persistent Papists, and that this was only evaded by the wholesale flight of the more devoted Catholics and the practice of more or less complete dissimulation by the others. What was done to the extreme Presbyterians between 1660 and 1688 was strictly what they had always said *ought* to be done to Papists. At the Restoration a number are found, as before Dunbar, calling on Charles II. to employ his power "in the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government"—that is, in subverting English religious liberty by enforcing Presbyterianism—"and to the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; and that all places of power and trust under your majesty may be filled with such as have taken the Covenant" (Burton, vii., 124). The fanatics who made this demand were now in a minority. "There can be no greater mistake than to suppose, as some people have from what afterwards befell, that these men represented the prevailing feeling of the Scots at the juncture of the Restoration. Whatever remnant of the old frenzy remained with these zealots of the west, the country at large, Presbyterian and Episcopalian, had little sympathy with it." "With the zealous Covenanters the landowners had now no common cause. A quarter of a century had passed since the climax of their terror, that the Church property gathered by them during the previous seventy-five years would be torn from them. A new generation now held these lands" (p. 126). Under a restored episcopacy, therefore, there was no choice for the zealots between surrender and suffering. But they were made of sterner stuff than the Papists had been; and, besides, had no such opening of escape to friends on the Continent as the Papists had at the Reformation, supposing they had possessed means enough to travel. Last, but not least, it has to be remembered that the new king had at command the military material worked up by the civil war and placed at his disposal by Monk; and that a military persecution was now possible

such as would have been practically out of the question in Scotland in the previous reigns.

Apart from the direct cruelty and iniquity of the persecution under Episcopalian auspices, it of course had the usual indirect effect of promoting the other form of bigotry against which it was directed; Episcopalianism having thus its ample share in that "perversion of Scotland" to barren fanaticism which we have been tracing. The Abjuration Act of the "drunken Parliament" [really a meeting of Privy Council] of 1662, by which three hundred and fifty clergymen were driven from their benefices, was a blunder even from the Episcopalian point of view (Burton, vii., 160, 178); and though a number of the expelled were led back by the Act of Indulgence of 1669, sufficient harm had been done to considerably strengthen the ranks and the prestige of the minority, to say nothing of the misery and bloodshed between.

Between the old forces of spontaneous or instilled zealotry and the ferocious persecutions carried on under Charles II. and James II., the unhappy bias of the country towards fanaticism was developed to an extent now difficult to realise. In England, with the computed issue of 30,000 pamphlets on mere Church questions between 1640 and 1660, there was a sufficiently lamentable waste of energy in polemics; but in Scotland there seems to have been no other intellectual life whatever. Divisions within divisions reduced all public or social action to a dreary delirium of words, in which the light of political as of every other sort of reason would seem to have gone out. A brief sketch of the disintegration of the Covenant movement will show as well as a lengthy dissertation the value of an impulse of fanaticism as a means to the attainment of good government:

"The original quarrel was between Covenanters and Episcopalians—called otherwise Cavaliers, and, after the manner of the the primitive Christiansin naming their persecutors, Malignants.

"The 'Engagement' of 1647, to assist the king and march into England, told off the Engagers, leaving the Nonengagers, otherwise called Abhorrers.

"The 'Act of Classes', under Argyle's Government in 1650, secluded from power all the Engagers, with some other persons, all being divided into classes according to the extent of their iniquities. The parties among the Covenanters were now Argyleites and Classites.

"The 'Resolution' to acknowledge Charles II. made Resolutioners, and Remonstrants or Protesters. In the earlier part of Charles II.'s reign the Presbyterians were divided into the Indulged and the Covenanters of the original Covenant, who were again subdivided into Resolutioners and Protesters.

"By the 'Sanquhar Declaration" a party of the Protesters withdrew under a new Covenant, and were called Sanquharians, Cameronians, Society men, Hill men, Mountain men, and Wild Westland Whigs" (Burton, vii., 248-9).

And the effect of it all was that the liberties of Scotland were still more utterly submerged than those of England. Where Cromwell had been tyrannous only in form[1], dealing with institutions, Charles II. was able to and did oppress in the most grinding fashion; and the extortions and atrocities of his military administrators failed to provoke anything like an effectual rising. Now that the propertied classes had no object in exploiting fanaticism, it was helpless against the military power of the Crown; and in the absence of any appeal to national sentiment those who did attempt insurrection were contemned by their compatriots. In connexion with the rising in 1666 of west country Covenanters, which ended in the battle of Pentland, "we hear of more sufferings to the remnant of their army from the peasantry around the place of their defeat, than from the victorious enemy, cruel as their general was reputed to be" (*Ib.*, p. 172). The abject democratic collapse of 1660—intelligible enough as the result of the enfeebling paternal autocracy of Cromwell—was at least as complete in Scotland as in England. Lauderdale and Rothes, who had been leading Covenanters of the profligate aristocratic type, became consummate instruments of monarchism; and the Estates, now a mere gathering of royalist gentry, voted away funds and liberties alike with an infinite complacency. Licence flourished more freely than ever did bigotry, and it seemed as if any spontaneous democratic life, fanatical or otherwise, was at an end for ever. That this was not so was clearly not the outcome of the old ecclesiastical influences.

[1] With a few exceptions. There is a doubtful story of his sentencing one minister to six months' imprisonment for saying, in the discussion which he held with the clergy in Edinburgh, that he had perverted Scripture. (See Wodrow's Analecta, Maitland Club, ii., 283-4). It is certain that Scotland enjoyed considerable prosperity under his despotism.

It would indeed be unwarrantable to say that such persecutions as those of Charles and James would never have provoked an effectual rebellion. It appears that after the failure of 1666, and still more during the reign of James, increasing sympathy had begun to be felt for the sufferers; and we can gather that the dangers of conventicle worship were gradually exercising an extending fascination. We have, for instance, an account of an open-air service at which 3,200 persons took the communion (McCrie's "Sketches", p. 466). But it is plain that the prospects of the conventicling party were still very black towards the end of James's reign; and here again, as in the previous crises of 1560 and 1637, the all-important element of pecuniary interest is found to be the decisive factor in precipitating change—so far, at least, as the affairs of Scotland separately are concerned. "Looking through the mismanagements of the period for the causes of the coming Revolution", writes Burton of the situation about the time of James's accession, "less will be found in these cruel inflictions on the western zealots, than in a project for extracting money from certain men of substance[1] throughout the country. They were called 'fugitives', as being persons who were liable to punishment under some one or other of the multitudinous penal laws then at work. They were a selected body of about two thousand. The position in which each was put was, that if he would frankly confess his offence and pay a stipulated fine, he would thenceforth be as exempt from all prosecution for the offence he had compounded for, as if he had received a remission under the great seal" (vii., 255-6; ref. to Wodrow, iv., 13). Add to this not only the deeply-rooted prejudice against the toleration of Papists, but the well-grounded conviction that James wished to restore Catholicism, a step which would soon involve an opening up of the old question of the appropriated Church lands and revenues, and we have the determining forces of the Revolution of 1688, from the Scottish standpoint.

Looking to the miseries endured by the conventiclers in the "Killing Time", it may seem invidious to lay stress on the intellectual disservice done by the sufferers to the

[1] They seem to have largely consisted of well-to-do people of the middle and artisan class. See Wodrow's list.

interests of the nation; but this is an element we cannot ignore. Suffering as they did from bigotry, bigotry was the inspiration of their own cause. The minister James Guthrie, hanged in 1661, had denounced toleration as a sin only a few months before his execution (Burton, vii., 155); and similarly James Renwick, the last of the "martyrs", on the scaffold in 1688 lifted up his "testimony against Popery, Prelacy, Erastianism; against all profanity and everything contrary to sound doctrine"; against the king's claim to absolute power; "and against this toleration flowing from this absolute power" (*Ib.*, p. 279; citing Wodrow, iv., 454). These men and their followers had no notion of the gospel of human brotherhood bound up in later struggles for liberty. When, under William IV., the Cameronian regiment, formed to resist the royalist movement of Viscount Dundee, was employed on the Continent, the protesting Cameronians at home were horrified, not at any practical acts of their former brethren, but at their fighting under the same banner with "Papists, Lutherans, Erastians, Cocceians, Bourignians" (Burton, vii., 325). They had neither political nor ethical principles to guide them. One of their worst grievances against James II. was that he proposed to include them under the same toleration with Papists (p. 270); and Wodrow, the zealous historian of their sufferings, is found lamenting that the Quakers had been allowed to spread so terribly, the "good Act" of 1663, which had proposed to drive them out of Edinburgh, having been allowed to lie comparatively idle (*Ibid.*, p. 271; "History of the Sufferings", ed. 1829, i., 377). He could bring no tolerable argument against the Episcopalian persecution. "That the Restoration Government had taken a lesson from the Covenanters was so obvious that Wodrow had in some measure to admit it, along with a palliation not likely to pass current with all men, in saying: 'It is not my province now to compare the matter of the one with the other here. The difference there is prodigiously great, there being evidently in the Covenants nothing but what was agreeable to the moral law, and what people were really bound to, whether they had sworn them or not'" (Burton, vii., 192; Wodrow, ii., 390).

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

XIII.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

(V.)

Finally, the body of later Covenanting zealots included many men of a lawless type, such as the fanatical ruffians who murdered Archbishop Sharp; and it is noted that the Cameronian regiment, "ere it gradually lapsed into the uniform modified licentiousness of other military bodies, exhibited a mixture of fanaticism and profligacy which deeply perplexed its hapless chaplain Shields" (Burton, vii., 326, and ref.). What may truly be said of them all is that they were brave men; indeed they brought their worst hardships upon themselves by the wild audacity with which they declared war on Charles II., (by the "Sanquhar Declaration") as a tyrant and usurper, and excommunicated (by the "Torwood Excommunication") the king, his brother, and the leading men in the government of Scotland. As to the "rabbling" of the west-country Episcopalian curates at the Revolution, Macaulay's account may be accepted as impartial:—"On Christmas day . . . . the Covenanters held armed musters by concert in many parts of the western shires. Each band marched to the nearest manse, and sacked the cellar and larder of the minister, which at that season were probably better stocked than usual. The priest of Baal was reviled and insulted, sometimes beaten, sometimes ducked. His furniture was thrown out of the windows; his wife and children turned out of doors in the snow. He was then carried to the market place and exposed during some time as a malefactor. His gown was torn to shreds over his head: if he had a prayer book in his pocket it was burned; and he was dismissed with a charge, never, as he valued his life, to officiate in the parish again. . . . . In fairness to these men it must be owned that they had suffered such oppression as may excuse, though it cannot justify, their violence; and that, though they were rude even to brutality, they

do not appear to have been guilty of any intentional injury to life or limb" ("History", ed. 1858, iii., 250). The details of the persecutions on the other side are worth summing up. Apart from the six or seven hundred killed in battle, those put to death by the royal troops are estimated at about five hundred; 382 are enumerated as executed by form of law; some 750 were banished to the northern islands, and about 1,700 to the Plantations, 200 of the latter perishing by shipwreck; while over 2,800 are calculated to have been imprisoned, and about 7,000 to have fled the country (McCrie's "Sketches", p. 558 and *note*). These figures are probably not far wide of the mark; and they represent the main historic testimony as to the advantage of the establishment of an Episcopalian Church in Scotland.

The effect of these later transactions on the general Scottish character does not fully appear at the time, just as the main influences of the Reformation did not fully assert themselves in the generation which saw it. Under the storm and stress of fanaticism and persecution one can detect certain traces of a popular life which had some of the old freshness, with a fair share of the old savagery. The old genius for commenting on public affairs by nicknames comes out in the name given to the one Presbyterian clergyman left in Edinburgh after the operation of the Abjuration Act. He was popularly called the "nest-egg". Again, there is a curious story (Lauder's "Historical Observes", Bannatyne Club, pp. 55, 303) of how the Heriot schoolboys in 1681, deciding that the dog at the hospital gate held a public office, voted that he must take "the Test" or be hanged. The poor dog refused the paper, and, on its being presented in a buttered state, licked off the butter: whereupon the boys, by way of ridiculing the case for the Crown in the trial of the Earl of Argyll, tried him at great length for *leasing making* or treason, and would have hanged him if he had not contrived to escape. This is at least not quite so bad as the exploit of killing a baillie, achieved by some boys of the Edinburgh grammar-school in 1595 ("Historie of James the Sext", Bannatyne Club, p. 352). But on the side of general culture, as represented by literature, the effect of over a century of more or less Puritan Protestantism becomes now direfully apparent. The consensus of testimony on this point, as Buckle notes, is over-

whelming. Principal Robertson, writing his History of Scotland in the middle of last century, sums up (Book viii., ed. 1806, iii., 199): "Thus during the whole seventeenth century the English were gradually refining their language and their taste; in Scotland the former was much debased and the latter almost entirely lost. In the beginning of that period both nations were emerging out of barbarity, but the distance between them, which was then inconsiderable, became, before the end of it, immense. Even after science had once dawned upon them, the Scots seemed to be sinking back into ignorance and obscurity; and, active and intelligent as they naturally are, they continued, while other nations were eager in the pursuit of fame and knowledge, in a state of languor." Laing, writing at the end of last century, is equally emphatic: "The taste and science, the genius and the learning of the age, were absorbed in the gulf of religious controversy. At a time when the learning of Selden and the genius of Milton conspired to adorn England, the Scots were reduced to such writers as Baillie, Rutherford, Guthrie, and the two Gillespies" (History, 2nd ed., iii., 479–80). Again: "From the Restoration down to the Union, the only author of eminence whom Scotland produced was Burnet" (*Ib.*, iv., 390). The scholar Pinkerton, writing in the same generation as Laing, declared that "not one writer who does the least credit to the nation flourished during the century from 1615 to 1715, excepting Burnet. . . . . By a singular fatality, the century which stands highest in English history and genius, is one of the darkest in those of Scotland" ("Ancient Scotish Poems", i., p. iv.). The last great name in Scottish intellectual life had been that of Napier, the inventor of logarithms, and Napier was born in 1550, ten years before the Reformation—and, it may be added, gained nothing from it but a useless theology. "It might have been expected", observes Robert Chambers, ("Annals," ii., 444), "that the country of Napier, seventy years after his time [he died in 1617], would have had many sons capable of applying his key to such mysteries of nature" as the phænomena of comets, concerning which the period yields only a collection of superstitious fancies. "But no one had arisen—nor did arise for fifty years onward, when at length Colin Maclaurin unfolded in the Edinburgh Uni-

versity the sublime philosophy of Newton. There could not be a more expressive signification of the character of the seventeenth century in Scotland. Our unhappy contentions about external religious matters had absorbed the whole genius of the people, rendering to us the age of Cowley, of Waller, and of Milton, as barren of elegant literature, as that of Horrocks, of Halley, and of Newton, was of science." Finally, Dr. Burton, who was willing to credit the Reformation with "bringing forth" the classical scholarship of the few distinguished Latinists connected with it, and who was able to take satisfaction in the literary powers of such men as Baillie, Dickson, and Rutherford, admits that at the Revolution of 1688 "all this glory was departed, and Scots Presbyterianism had scarcely a representative in the world of letters. . . . . There was no theologian", even, "alive in Scotland at the era of the Revolution, whose writings have been admitted into the current theological literature of the world" (vii., 405–6). As Buckle points out (iii., 286, *note*) such a writer as Dickson protested against even so much biblical criticism as would go to ascertaining the date and authorship of any of the Hebrew books. All this obviously implies the sterilising of general culture, and we know in point of fact that the clergy kept a tenacious hold of all means of education. We have seen (*ante*, p. 143; compare Buckle iii., 288, *note*) how at the Reformation they assumed control of all the schools and universities; and in 1648 the Fifeshire brethren are found ordering "all young students, who waittes on noblemen or gentlemen within thir bounds, aither to teach ther children, or catechise and pray in ther families, to frequent the Presbyterie, that the brether may cognosce what they ar reading, and what proficiencie they make in ther studies, and to know also ther behaviour in the said families and of ther affectione to the Covenant and present religione" (extract in Buckle, as above). Thus not only in parish school and university, but in private houses, was education superintended by the class who saw in all notable natural phænomena instances of miraculous divine action; who regarded disease as amenable only to prayer; who were constantly engaged in impeaching, ferreting out, torturing, and killing, unhappy women on suspicion of an impossible crime; who preached intolerance as the man-

date of the creator of the universe, and who regarded the spinning of theological ropes of sand as the noblest exercise of the human mind. So much had the State establishment of the Protestant religion done for Scotland by the time of the fall of the Stewart line.

But there is one more historical fact of perhaps still more salient importance as bearing on the received theory that State Protestantism has always promoted freedom. It is the little noted circumstance that in the seventeenth century the institution of slavery had grown up in Scotland, in connexion with the working of collieries and salt-works. The laborers who dug coal and made salt—they were chiefly located in East Lothian—"went to those who bought or succeeded to the property of the works, and they could be sold, bartered, or pawned. What is peculiar and revolting in this institution is, that it was no relic of ancient serfdom, but a growth of the seventeenth century. We have seen, indeed, that serfdom had a feebler hold on Scotland than on England. We have also seen how astonished and enraged the French auxiliaries of the Scots in the wars with England were at the insolent independence of the common people, impoverished as they were. The oldest trace we have of the bondage of the colliers and salt-workers is an Act of the year 1606, passed, as it would seem, to strengthen somewhat as to them the laws so common at the time for restricting the pursuit of all occupations to those embarked in them. By interpretations of this Act, but more by the tyrannous power of the strong owners of the soil over a weak and unfriended community, slavery had been as amply established [in Scotland] as ever it had been in Rome, Sparta, or Virginia" (Burton, viii., 7, 8). It subsisted all through the war for "religious liberty"; it was left untouched at the "glorious revolution" of 1688. The Church of Rome had at least sought to free all slaves but its own: there is no trace that the Protestant clergy of Scotland ever raised a voice against the slavery which grew up before their eyes. And it was not till 1799, after republican and irreligious France had set the example, that it was legally abolished (Cockburn's "Memorials", ed. 1856, p. 79).

The final establishment of Presbyterianism under William and Mary brings us within plain prospect of modern times—the ecclesiastical history of the subsequent period

having practically run in one groove—and it may be convenient here to indicate concisely the ups and downs of the previous century and a half.

1535. Act of Parliament, following up an earlier, prohibiting the importation of the works of "the grete heretik luther", ordering destruction of copies in hand, and sternly forbidding discussion of his "dampnable opinionis". (See Tytler, ii., 357; Acts ii., 342.)
1560. Catholic Church overthrown by Act of Parliament. Hierarchy left an open question.
1572. "Tulchan" bishops appointed by Government—at that time an aristocratic Regency.
1580. Bishops repudiated by General Assembly.
1592. Episcopacy abolished by Parliament.
1597. Episcopacy as a political function re-established by Parliament. 1598. This acceded to by General Assembly. 1600. Act of Assembly ratifying the arrangement, and defining the episcopal office as parliamentary.
1606. King obtains control of Assemblies. Parliament (nominally) confers the old revenues on bishops. 1610. This ratified by a packed and bribed Assembly, which still stipulated that bishops should be subject to Assembly. 1612. Parliament finally ratifies, ignoring that stipulation.
1617. Acts for the recovery of the minor Catholic temporalities, and for better payment of ministers.
1618. James carries ceremonial innovations.
1626. Attempt by Charles I. to recover the tithes for the Church, by way of strengthening episcopacy.
1638–9. Episcopacy repudiated by Covenanting Assembly, Charles yielding; and Parliament ratifying in 1640.
1653. Cromwell suppresses the Assembly, having already suppressed the Parliament.
1660–1. Episcopacy fully re-established; Sharp, the Presbyterian delegate to court, turning his coat and becoming Archbishop of St. Andrews. 350 clergymen expelled under Abjuration Act in 1662; the majority returning under Indulgence Act in 1669. The others persecuted.

1679. Murder of Sharp, followed by second unsuccessful insurrection. Persecution heightened.
1688. Fall of James II. Expulsion of curates in the Cameronian districts. 1689. 184 non-juring clergymen deposed by Privy Council. Act abolishing episcopacy. 1690. Act abolishing civil pains of excommunication. Act establishing Presbyterianism.

It was in 1696 that the Scottish Parliament passed an Act for "settling of schools", which adjusted the famous system of parochial schools, already partly established by the first Protestants, and by Acts of Charles I. and of the Covenanters' Parliament in 1646. It was in the same year of 1696 that the Scottish Presbyterian clergy committed one of the blackest acts of cruelty in the annals of religious persecution. A boy of eighteen, Thomas Aikenhead, a student in Edinburgh, had come to the conclusion that the doctrine of the Trinity was an absurdity, that pantheism was a more philosophic doctrine than theism, and that the authorship of the Old Testament books was otherwise than was commonly stated; and expressed himself accordingly, in a fashion which Macaulay—in what I cannot but suspect to be a disingenuous passage (iv., 784)—says he would probably have been ashamed of if he had lived to maturity. There was no pretence that he had "obtruded his views", as the bigots of to-day would say; the witnesses against him being with one exception the young companions to whom he unburdened himself. At the instigation of the clergy, this boy was tried before the High Court of Justiciary for blasphemy, under an Act of the devout Restoration period, and though there was no proper proof of his guilt in the terms of the statute he was sentenced to death. The boy not unnaturally broke down, professing both penitence and orthodoxy, and pleading his youth in extenuation; but the clergy, having been able to carry matters thus far, would hear of no pardon. Just as La Barre was later given up to the priests in France, this weeping boy was given up to the Presbyterian bigots of Scotland by the Privy Council there—the decision being carried by the casting vote of the Chancellor. This was Sir Patrick Hume, one of the heroes of the Covenanting party, who thus, says Macaulay, accomplished "the worst action of his bad life"; and the prosecuting Crown lawyer

was a worthless political time-server. An attempt to get the boy off came to nothing, the execution being hastened as if to prevent the interposition of the king, who was known to be averse to persecution (Burton, viii., 77; Macaulay, iv., 785). It is on record—by a personage who believed in demoniac possession—that the ministers "spok and preached for cutting him off" (State Trials, xiii., 930).

Ten years after the Revolution, Scotland is found to be sufficiently far from moral regeneration under the auspices of the now triumphant Presbyterian Church. Fletcher of Saltoun, republican as he was, could see no means, short of the general establishment of domestic slavery, by which the vast pauperism of the country could be grappled with. Here is a part of his testimony:—"There are at this day in Scotland (besides a great many poor families very meanly provided for by the church-boxes, with others who by living upon bad food fall into various diseases) *two hundred thousand people begging from door to door*. . . . And although the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of this present great distress, yet in all times there have been about one hundred thousand of those vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and nature; fathers incestuously accompanying with their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister. . . . Many murders have been discovered among them; and they are not only an unspeakable oppression to poor tenants (who if they give not bread or some kind of provision to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them), but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbourhood. In years of plenty many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other the like publick occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together" (Fletcher's Works, ed. 1732, pp. 144—6).

And this savage pauperism remained a salient feature in Scottish life for many generations. "Before the general establishment of poor's rates", writes Dr. Thomas Somerville in 1813, "the country was overrun with vagrant

beggars. They had access to every house, and received their alms in meal and bread. . . . . Strolling beggars often travelled in companies, and used to take up their night quarters at the houses of the tenant farmers" ("My Own Life and Times," p. 370). And Gibson, the historian of Glasgow, writes that in 1707 "the body of the people were but a degree above want; the streets were crowded with beggars, both old and young, who were willing to work, could they have found employment" ("History of Glasgow", p. 106, cited in *Scottish Review*, Sept., 1883, p. 250). Such poverty, it need hardly be said, meant vice and degradation; and the case against the Established Church, regarded as a claimant to credit for promoting civilisation, is not merely that it did not check such demoralisation, but that it on the whole resisted those influences which made for better things. To begin with, the clergy habitually represented dearth and distress as a divine punishment for national sin; never as an evil to be got rid of by strenuous effort; and such a calamity as the collapse of the Darien Scheme was singled out with special emphasis as the work of a chastising Providence. (See Chambers' "Domestic Annals", iii., 221, 241.) There could hardly be a stronger implicit discouragement to enterprise; but there was explicit discouragement likewise. Wodrow, who typifies the clerical mind of the time, writes in 1709 of "the sin of our too great fondness for trade, to the neglecting of our more valuable interests" (Wodrow's "Correspondence", ed. 1842, i., 67; cited by Buckle, iii., 160; also "Analecta", i., 218). This in a country on which the sword of famine had fallen every few years, as far back as living memory went; a country whose poverty was not to be paralleled among the northern states of Europe; and whose largest trading city even then had its streets "crowded with beggars, willing to work, could they have found employment".

The retardation of material progress might have been forgiven, if any enlightenment had been gained by the loss; but poverty of mind went with poverty of body. The killing of the boy Aikenhead is an index to the clerical capacity for tolerance at the beginning of the 18th century. When the Act of Toleration was passed for the benefit of Scottish Episcopalians in 1712, it met with the bitterest clerical opposition. Dr. Burton (viii., 224, *et seq.*)

charitably finds reasons outside of mere intolerance for their outcry, but even such a champion of the Church as the late Dr. Tulloch was unable to shelter himself behind such excuses. "The Toleration Act of 1712," he writes, "was a statute of freedom, obnoxious as it was to the great body of the Presbyterians. It confined the ecclesiastical power to its own sphere; and, while it left the Church its anathemas against schism and 'innovations in the worship of God', protected all who chose to put themselves voluntarily beyond its pale from all forcible interference. It is melancholy to think that even the Church of Carstares did what it could to oppose such a law, and that it can be said with truth by the modern historian that the Scottish Parliament would never have ventured to pass it" ("The Church of the Eighteenth Century", St. Giles Lectures, 1881, p. 260). Dr. Somerville, again, expressly confesses that "many of the members of the Established Church, of . . . . education and of unquestionable piety, regarded the indulgence of Episcopacy as a crime on the part of the legislature" ("Life and Times", p. 375). And official documents of the time unambiguously spoke of the "grievances of the Church of Scotland, ... as the Act granting so large and almost boundless Tolleration to those of the Episcopal persuasion in Scotland" (Spalding Club Miscellany, i., 229). It is hardly necessary to add that when punishment for witchcraft was abolished in 1736, the Scotch clergy were among the bitterest protesters.

It is sometimes contended that the remarkable literary revival which took place in Scotland in the middle and latter part of the eighteenth century should go to the credit of the Church, some of the distinguished writers of the period having been in its ministry. Stout old Dr. Alexander Carlyle, of Inveresk, known in his day as "Jupiter Carlyle", has an eloquent passage implying such a claim, though he was little in sympathy with the devout Presbyterianism of his day. "We have men", he declared, "who have successfully enlightened the world on almost every branch of knowledge and of Christian doctrine and morals. Who have written the best histories, ancient and modern? It has been clergymen of this Church. Who has written the clearest delineation of the human understanding and all its powers? A clergyman of this Church. Who wrote a tragedy that has been

deemed perfect? A clergyman of this Church. Who was the most profound mathematician of the age he lived in? A clergyman of this Church" ("Autobiography", p. 561). But it happens that an analysis of that panegyric yields the most crushing refutation of the pretence that the Church had any merit in the matter. Not one of the luminaries mentioned is representative of its true inwardness and practical influence; indeed, some of them came in collision with it. Adam Ferguson, who wrote the History of the Roman Republic, never took a parish charge, though he had been licensed to preach. Reid, the friend of Gregory and Dugald Stewart, was utterly outside the spirit of the Scottish Church of his day. Principal Robertson, while, like Carstares, he was the leader of a Church of which the prevailing temper was so widely different from his own, was in reality so alien to its tendencies that when in 1779 he advocated the repeal of the laws against Catholics, he was in danger of his life from the raving populace, which was countenanced in its bigotry by the majority of the clergy (Stewart's "Life of Robertson", Works, ed. 1817, i., 122). Home, the author of the tragedy "deemed perfect"—the once famous "Douglas", now, alas! utterly forgotten—had to leave the ministry because of the outcry against him by his brethren for writing that very tragedy; and "Jupiter" himself was menaced with a prosecution for countenancing his friend and the theatre in general. But there is no need to pile up evidence: Dr. Tulloch has admitted that "the popular and the moderate clergy of the eighteenth century stand apart" (St. Giles Lectures, p. 285); and the men Dr. Carlyle praised were, I believe, without an exception "moderates", as he was himself. And, what is extremely significant, Dr. Tulloch could not lecture even in 1881 without apologising to his fellow-churchmen for the very "moderation" of these men—precisely the quality in respect of which they attained intellectual distinction.

But there is a further refutation, even more conclusive than the direct disproof above given. For the true explanation of the Scottish literary revival of last century let us turn to the other and greater Carlyle, who, though not a Churchman, was not at all hostilely disposed to the Puritan tradition:—"For a long period after Scotland became British we had no literature; at the date when

Addison and Steele were writing their *Spectators*, our good John Boston was writing, with the noblest intent, but alike in defiance of grammar and philosophy, his *Fourfold State of Man*. Then came the schisms in our National Church, and the fiercer schisms in our Body Politic; Theologic ink and Jacobite blood, with gall enough in both cases, it seemed, to have blotted out the intellect of the country. . . . . Lord Kames made nearly the first attempt at writing English; and ere long Hume, Robertson, Smith, and a whole host of followers, attracted hither the eyes of all Europe. And yet in this brilliant resuscitation of our 'fervid genius' there was nothing truly Scottish, nothing indigenous; except, perhaps, the national impetuosity of intellect, which we sometimes claim, and are sometimes upbraided with, as a characteristic of our nation. It is curious to remark that Scotland, so full of writers, had no Scottish culture, nor indeed any English; our culture was exclusively French. It was by studying Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau, that Kames had trained himself to be a critic and philosopher: it was the light of Montesquieu and Mably that guided Robertson in his political speculations; Quesnay's lamp that kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. Hume was too rich to borrow, and perhaps he reacted on the French more than he was acted on by them; but neither had he aught to do with Scotland; Edinburgh, equally with La Flèche, was but the lodging and laboratory, in which he not so much morally *lived*, as metaphysically *investigated*" (Essay on Burns, ed. 1840, p. 361).

That passage, despite Carlyle's aversion—which comes out in the context—to the rationalism of the writers he mentions, seems to me substantially sound, if we take "indigenous" to imply those intellectual qualities chiefly conspicuous in Scotland from the Reformation to the Union. Truly the group round Hume got nothing from their predecessors; there was simply nothing for such minds to get in the Puritan period, and they were too far removed in every way from the præ-Puritan period to take up the broken strands of the old national literature. At the Union, as we have seen, Scottish literature was a blank, and it was, as Carlyle says, French seed that raised the great crop in the latter half of the century. And Carlyle indirectly, and perhaps unconsciously, points the moral

when he says that the state of things he describes is "unexampled, so far as we know, *except perhaps at Geneva, where the same state of matters appears still to continue*". Geneva was from the first Scotland's ecclesiastical model; and the coincidence in the matter of literary paralysis is indeed significant. The intimate union of democracy and hierocracy obviously does not engender literary genius. It is worth noticing, by the way, that in the England of the period above scanned, where the State Church was then at its most unchallenged supremacy, and there was no French school of culture as in Scotland, there was no intellectual product comparable to the Scotch, if we exclude Gibbon, who again, as Buckle has remarked, was a Frenchman in his culture.

If we change the line of investigation and ask what the Scottish Church specifically did last century to promote culture of any sort, we find no evidence whatever beyond the item of the introduction of the Bible into the Gaelic districts. It may indeed have some doubtful credit for what it indirectly did by keeping up the parish schools, though the object of these was primarily to strengthen itself by inculcating its dogmas; but its failure to promote even ecclesiastical culture effectively is notorious. "When I was a student of divinity", writes Dr. Somerville, who studied at Edinburgh about the middle of the century, "Hebrew was little cultivated, or altogether omitted, by the great number of the theological students" ("Life and Times", p. 18). And Greek, there is good reason to believe, was only a little less unfamiliar. There would be, of course, no very serious weight in the old lamentations over the scarcity of classical culture in Scotland if such scarcity had been balanced by an enlightened promotion of culture of a more vital and valuable kind. An irrational estimate of the value of an academic command of Greek and Latin has notoriously been a serious bar to intellectual advance in England till quite recently, if it is not so still. Apart, however, from the non-ecclesiastical, France-derived culture already spoken of, it is quite impossible to detect in the Scotland of last century any official diffusion of sound knowledge equal in value to the classical cultus of the English universities. The great mass of the clergy had neither Greek nor science, neither philosophy nor art, neither belles-lettres nor general knowledge; and all the

evidence goes to show that the spirit of clericalism as developed by the country's religious history was responsible for this general destitution. There is a comic story preserved by Lord Cockburn, of how Sidney Smith in the street one dark night overheard old Dalzel, the distinguished Grecian, muttering to himself on his way home, with regard to the inferiority of Scotland to England in classicism, that "If it had not been for that confounded Solemn League and Covenant, we would have made as good longs and shorts as they" ("Memorials," p. 20). And yet Dalzel was clerk to the General Assembly—another proof of the aloofness of Scottish culture from the spirit of the Church. It is only right to say that while "longs and shorts" were never very successfully cultivated in Scotland, the intellectual movement above sketched included a more methodic treatment of the literature and history of Rome than had yet taken place in England; Ruddiman and Hunter, for instance, being admittedly among the ablest Latinists of their age; while the first good English manual of Roman antiquities was that of Adams. But here again, no thanks are due to the Church. Most of us could forgive Covenanterism the most complete dearth of native Latin verses if it had done anything to foster even such a partial organisation of human knowledge as the good Adams aimed at, or such a reconstruction of the past as was represented by the work of the Scottish historians of the century.

As for the direct and indirect intellectual influence of the Church in other directions, it is only too palpable in a negative fashion. Painting and sculpture could scarcely be said to exist in Scotland last century (Burton, viii., 536–7). Of music, beyond the primitive airs, there was none; the tabooing of the organ in worship keeping the country far behind even England in that regard. "The Earl of Kelly, a man of yesterday, was the first Scotsman who ever composed music for an orchestra" (Chambers' "Traditions of Edinburgh", ed. 1869, p. 279). And in a matter which many will think rather more important, there is a still more direct indictment standing against the Protestant State Church. "The ancient church [*i.e.* the Catholic] was honorably distinguished by its charity towards the poor, and more especially the diseased poor; and it was a dreary interval of nearly two centuries which in-

tervened between the extinction of its lazar-houses and leper-houses, and the time when merely a civilised humanity dictated the establishment of a regulated means of succor for the sickness-stricken of the humble classes. The date here affixed [August 6, 1729] is an interesting one, as that *when a hospital of the modern type was first opened in Scotland for the reception of poor patients*" (Chambers' "Domestic Annals", iii., 557). And for this first hospital, it should further be noted, the funds were raised "chiefly by the activity of the medical profession" (p. 559).

In dealing with the condition of Scotland for a generation after the Reformation, we saw reason to reject the view of Buckle—hastily adopted by him, I observe, from Dr. McCrie—that the Presbyterian clergy had the merit of so stimulating the spirit of independence among the people as to extend their liberties and their political power. In point of fact, the self-assertion of the Scottish democracy, as such, had been more marked and more effectual before the Reformation than after. We saw, again, how the outcome of the Covenant movement was an effacement of national institutions under Cromwell, followed by an all-penetrating oppression under Charles II. It has now further to be noted that, though under William and Mary the Presbyterian clergy showed something of the old Covenanting turbulence, the political history of Scotland from the beginning to the end of the eighteenth century was one of progressive political retrogression; till at the opening of the nineteenth century the country could make no more pretence to be governed on genuinely constitutional principles than any State on the Continent. After the repression of the Jacobite rising of 1745, it seemed as if the nation had lost the faculty of political initiative. Not that it was governed with actual cruelty: the harm lay rather in the suppression of every democratic aspiration, and of the all-important instinct of self-government in every direction save that of the mere domestic economy of the Kirk. But in the long run, when the example of the French Revolution bore its full fruit among us in aristocratic reaction, the tyranny became gross and brutal. Everyone who has read the memoirs of the times is aware of the completeness of the repression. "Public political meetings," says Cockburn ("Memorials," p. 88), "did not arise, for the elements did not exist. I doubt if there was

one during the twenty-five years that succeeded the year 1795". That was the period of his own adult experience, up to the beginnings of political reform; and I cannot discover that matters were different in the previous generation, which was one of considerable political activity in England. "With the people put down and the Whigs powerless," he says again (p. 86), "Government was the master of nearly every individual in Scotland, but especially in Edinburgh, which was the chief seat of its influence;" and he even testifies (pp. 89-90) that in the matter of Church management the principle of democracy was so entirely discarded that the expression of a wish by an Edinburgh congregation in regard to the appointment of a pastor was made by the Government a reason for appointing someone else.

Now, this state of things is certainly not in itself an argument against the national Church, but it is a crushing disproof of the common assertion that that Church has all along kept alive the spirit of democracy. That is one more ecclesiastical myth. If there was anything that a liberty-loving Church might be expected to be emphatic about, it was the slavery of the colliers and salters. Yet not only did the clergy never agitate in the matter, but they took positively no notice of the Act of liberation in 1799; and their flocks generally were so indifferent that there is no record of the event in the Scots Magazine of that year, or of the year 1775, when the first legislative step was taken. "People cared nothing about colliers on their own account, and the taste for improving the lower orders had not then began to dawn" (Cockburn's "Memorials", p. 79). In the days of Tory supremacy, those who ventured to attend the annual dinner on Fox's birthday had their names taken down at the door of the meeting place by sheriff's officers, by way of menace (*Ibid.* p. 91). Ecclesiastical democratism did not meddle with outrages of that kind—to say nothing of the iniquitous trials and infamous sentences for so-called sedition.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

XIV.

THE PERVERSION OF SCOTLAND.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

(VI.)

Cockburn's testimony as to the political inaction of the Church is decisive. The Whig advocates, as he points out, were the real movers in the cause of political liberty among the educated classes. "The profession of these men armed them with better qualities than any other could supply in a country without a Parliament. . . . . It was among them accordingly that independence found its only asylum. It had a few silent though devoted worshippers elsewhere, but the Whig counsel were its only open champions. The Church can boast of Sir Henry Moncreiff alone as its contribution to the cause; but he was *too faithful to his sacred functions to act as a political partisan.* John Allen and John Thomson, of the medical profession, were active and fearless. And the College gave Dugald Stewart, John Playfair, and Andrew Dalzel" ("Memorials," pp. 84–5).

In all directions, then, a search for proofs of the service so often alleged to have been done for Scotland by the national Church, leads to a demonstration that its influence has on the contrary been substantially for evil. We have found, to begin with, that the Reformation was the outcome not of high-minded religious fervor, but of aristocratic greed; and we have seen that wherever the ecclesiastical spirit proper came into play, the result was, with hardly an exception, disaster to the nation's best interests. The new superstitions were darker and deadlier than the old. The Church never raised morals and manners by being, in its practice, ahead of the average ethics of the day. It not only blighted every form of art, but absolutely suspended the evolution of Scottish literature for some two hundred years; so that when a new growth commenced, the inspiration had perforce to come from other countries. The vaunted services of the Church to the cause of political

liberty are found to be sheer delusion and imposture, inasmuch as, within its own sphere, it all along laid on the people burdens grievous to be borne, while latterly failing to touch political tyranny so much as with the tips of its fingers.

It is never an easy matter to generalise soundly on the origin and explanation of national characteristics; but I submit that the case is tolerably clear as to the net effect of the establishment of the national Presbyterian Church on the character of the people of Scotland. Before the Reformation they were vivacious, art-loving, full of healthy life: since then they have become "Museless", as Mr. Ruskin would say; and the darkness cast over their life by clericalism has marked them out as the most fanatical of Protestant peoples, with the nominal exception of the Presbyterians of Ulster, who are, indeed mostly of Scotch descent. England, too, has been blighted by Puritanism, as Mr. Arnold has so often told his countrymen; but the shadow is darker on Scotland. Nowhere, probably, is life made so little of, in the way of all-round enjoyment, proportionately to the means available. Cultured Scotchmen have born ample witness to the sinister results of the hierocracy in individual as well as in public life. Take Professor Masson. His view of the history of the Kirk is to a large extent the conventional one, tinctured with a flavor of Carlyle, but this is his feeling about the general effect of Presbyterian discipline in his native land:—"In no country does one see more manly, courageous, and strongly-original faces; but it might be a fair speculation whether in the 'pawky' type of physiognomy which is often to be marked in Scottish streets, conjoined with the soft walk, the sleek black gloves touching each other in front, and the evasive or sidelong glance, there is not a relic of that old ecclesiastical tyranny which drilled a considerable percentage of Scotsmen through several generations into a look of acquiescence in propositions known to be untenable" ("Drummond of Hawthornden", p. 375). The portrait is somewhat crude, but every Scotchman can recall the type Dr. Masson is thinking of. It is not so much that the rule of the Kirk forced men to pretend to accept "propositions known to be untenable": unhappily it taught them to believe its worst incredibilities, and crippled their very faculty of thinking for themselves; but it made

hypocrites and fanatics by the thousand. Scotland is not, in a general way, more hypocritical than England: that is impossible: but in matters of religious dissimulation, formalism, and lip-service, it makes up for any falling short of English attainment in other forms of insincerity.

Did the Church effect anything in the way of promoting good morals? The one species of immorality on which it laid anything like the stress it put on witchcraft and Sabbath-breaking was sexual licence; and what has been the result of its interference? Only the other day a London journal which makes it its business to be "moral" in the English sense, was congratulating England on having such a very much lower rate of illegitimate births than Scotland. I do not share the conception of morality which looks on the illegitimate birth-rate as the test of a nation's general moral position; but there is no disputing that it is the index of a large amount of unhappiness, hardship, and degradation; and all Churches agree in deploring its existence. Why then is "Bible-loving", Kirk-governed Scotland such a sinner in this regard? This is not the place to go into the whole question, but here too the policy of the Church is arraigned by competent Scotchmen. Dr. Burton (viii., 388–9), sums up in these terms:

"It does not follow that because the clerical inquisition [*i.e.*, the general presbyterial and sessional discipline] displayed scenes of revolting licentiousness, it created them. But, on the other hand, it is very obvious to those who read the session records, and otherwise trace the manners of the age, that it did little, if anything, towards their suppression. . . . . The more vice was dragged from the dark, the more seemed to be left behind to be dragged forth, and the inquisition went on, ceaseless and ineffective. The people became familiar with the sight—sometimes too familiar with its cause. If the degradation on one Sunday were insufficient, it should be followed by another and another. It became matter of boast that a parish had risen so much higher in rigidity than its neighbors as to demand more appearances in the place of scorn. A frail victim was sometimes compelled to appear on nine or ten successive Sundays, exposed to the congregation in the seat of shame. The most noticeable effect often produced by the exhibition

was in the gibes and indecorous talk of the young peasants, who, after a few significant glances during the admonition, and a few words at the church door, adjourned the general question for discussion in the change-house. Sometimes it was noticed that the young Jacobite lairds, who would not be otherwise induced to enter a Presbyterian place of worship, strayed to the parish church to have an opportunity of seeing the latest addition to the frail sisterhood of the neighbourhood. The exposure sometimes hardened hearts otherwise redeemable; or drove the erring to deeper crimes for the concealment of their guilt. Thus this rigid system, however highly it may have purified the virtue of the select few who were the patterns and leaders of the flock, doubtless deserved the reproach often cast upon it, of driving weaker brethren either into hypocrisy or recklessness, by compelling the people to be either puritans or reprobates."

The historian's judgment seems to me to be absolutely just—or rather to err only on the side of under-statement. It points to a fact in Scottish life which has misled many observers—the coexistence, even in the same circles, of real or assumed fanaticism and more or less demoralising riot. And Dr. Burton's summing-up indicates the explanation—that the one thing implies the other. Asceticism always has a foil of coarseness; witness the offensive fact that John Knox, when a decrepit old widower of fifty-nine, with grown-up children, married a girl of at most seventeen years, affianced to him at about sixteen—a fact probably not known to one person in a hundred in Scotland, so industriously have his biographers suppressed it. (See Burton, v., 86, and Laing's Knox, vi., 532, 533. Dr. McCrie shirks the truth.) The life of Burns has brought before English readers the chequered aspect of popular Scottish morality. Austerity and joyless gloom on the one hand produce their natural corrective in dissolute mirth and defiant licence on the other; and the poet, only too able to see the element of hypocrisy in the austerity, brands the picture of it all in his vividest verse; triumphantly impeaching the Kirk before posterity in the "Holy Fair", and impaling a typical hypocrite, drawn from the life, on the barbs of a murderous satire. Better than any service the hapless singer could render to culture by any beauty of his song was the moral shock of the

breeze and the lightning of his mockery and his human protest, blowing and flashing through the world of Pharisaism and shamefaced good fellowship around him. But his genius could not make an end of cant and bigotry, any more than it could transform debauchery at once into healthy joy.

A moral duality, so to speak, runs through past Scottish life in a way that becomes at times perplexing. Burton notes (vii., 425) that "the higher order have always in Scotland but scantily partaken in the religious fervor so abundant among the humbler body of the people"; and this divergence ramified in many directions. Thus we find that when in 1723 a dancing assembly was established in Edinburgh it was almost wholly supported by "Tories and Episcopalians" (Chambers' "Domestic Annals", iii., 480). Cruel as the Episcopal Church had been in its period of supremacy, it was certainly more human in its later social influence than the Presbyterian; the persecution through which it in turn passed after its marked association of itself with Jacobitism having perhaps a salutary effect. It of necessity had affinities for art; and its adherents appear to have been the main patrons of what music and painting existed in the country. To its ranks, too, seem to have belonged most of those delightful old ladies immortalised for us by Dean Ramsay, with their bracing originality, their vigorous wit, their keen understandings, and their delicious profanity. The incomparable old lady, widow of a clergyman, told of by Cockburn ("Memorials," p. 58)—who, on hearing her granddaughter read a newspaper paragraph telling how the "first gentleman in Europe" had compromised a lady's reputation, rose to her feet with the startling exclamation, "The dawmed villain, does he kiss and tell!"—that chivalrous moralist of four-score clearly inherited the Cavalier tradition, and not the Covenanting. Beside that estimable dame and her kind, it happens, we have to set a brotherhood not so estimable, of hard-drinking lairds, frantic Jacobites, and brutal judges, all exhibiting the riotous and bibulous national strain as opposed to the fanatical, whether or not all Episcopalian; but perhaps they in their way were not wholly without redeeming merit as correcting in some degree the blanching gloom and cold constriction of the reigning cult.

One of the plainest marks of the Church's hold on Scottish life—one of the strongest evidences of its social influence for harm—is the national Sabbatarianism. That is emphatically a social condition of Church manufacture. As early as the twelfth century, it appears, Queen Margaret of sainted memory sought to impose strict Sabbatical restraints on the people; but during the Stewart period, down to the Reformation, Scotland enjoyed the same freedom in that particular matter as the rest of Catholic Europe. Even the first Reformers, like Calvin, were partly free from the Sabbatarian superstition; Knox having no objection to feast his friends on preaching day (Burton, v., 86). It was the Judaizing of the later Presbyterians that made the Scotch Sunday the gazing-stock of civilised Europe. The clergy resisted the really sensible attempts of James VI. to liberalise Sabbath observance; in 1640 the Covenanting Parliament is found legislating according to their wishes (*Ib.*, vi., 287); and practically ever since they have kept their clutch on the first day of the week. In 1693 the Edinburgh Town Council passed an Act prohibiting all standing or strolling on Sundays in the streets or on the Castle Hill—the only open space then within the city walls (Chambers' "Annals", iii., 342); and in 1709 clerical complaint is made that nevertheless the Sabbath is "profaned by people standing on the streets", "*also by idle gazing out at windows*" (*Ib.*, p. 344).

The superstition got hold of the clear heads as well as the cloudy. Sir John Dick Lauder, the careful lawyer, perpends thus judicially in 1686: "This winter ther happened three fyres at Edinburgh, and all on the Sabbath day, to signify God's displeasure at the profanation of his day: tho ther is no certain conclusion can be drawn from thesse providentiall accidents, for a Jew would draw just the contrare conclusion, that God was dissatisfyed with our worshipping him on that day; so thesse providences may be variously interpreted" ("Historical Observes", p. 246). The faint vestige of common sense here apparent soon faded from the discussion of the subject.

And yet Cockburn, looking back about 1825 to his own young days, declares that he "could mention many practices of our old pious which would horrify modern zealots. . . . . In nothing do these differences appear more strikingly than in matters connected with the observance

of Sunday. Hearing what is often confidently prescribed now as the only proper mode of keeping the Christian Sabbath, and then recollecting how it was recently kept by Christian men, ought to teach us charity in the enforcement of observances" ("Memorials," p. 43). The explanation is twofold. For one thing, Cockburn had lived in the Episcopalian stratum; but apart from that there had really taken place during his lifetime a change for the worse in the intellectual atmosphere of Scotch society—the inevitable result of the steady pressure of the sinister ecclesiastical influence against that culture which, as Carlyle has shown us, had been imported into Scotland from France in the eighteenth century. The writer of the ecclesiastical chapter at the end of Wright's "History of Scotland" (iii., 607) briefly describes the transition from the restricted and non-popular reign of "moderatism", after Robertson's day, to the "evangelicalism" of later times:—"Towards the end of the century . . . . the current began to turn, and, partly from the returning favor of Government, and partly through the earnest and able advocacy of men like Dr. Erskine, Sir Henry Moncrieff, and Dr. Andrew Thomson, the evangelical party gradually gained the upper hand in the Assembly, and finally a new life was given to it, after 1815, by the energy and talents of the celebrated Dr. Thomas Chalmers, while people's attention was extensively carried back again and fixed on the examples and doctrines of the earlier Scottish reformers by the writings of Dr. McCrie and others." In other words, the inherent reactionary bias of the ecclesiastical system had turned back the hands of the social clock. We have sufficiently seen what was the bearing and value of the "examples and doctrines of the earlier Scottish reformers".

To do Chalmers justice, he was more than a mere past-worshipping ecclesiastic. He was almost the only Scotch clergyman who has had at once the intelligence and the courage to openly proclaim the vital importance of the principle of population worked out by Malthus; and he did other service to economic science. But here again the Church has been true to its mission. In all the clerical eulogy of the memory of Chalmers, not a solitary voice dwells on his social philosophy; and the great majority of Scotchmen now do not even know that he was a Malthusian.

I have gone through two biographies of him without lighting on a single allusion to the fact.

It will perhaps be argued that, seeing the "evangelical" movement of the present century was synchronous with the beginnings of political liberty, the inner spirit of the Church was thus after all influential for democracy. But the facts will not square with such a theory. That movement was independent of the political awakening, of which the active spirits were such men as Jeffrey and Cockburn, who—though not unbelievers—were in favor of the exclusion of religion from the public schools, in view of the irreconcilable dissensions of the sects. This last social feature is one of the things for which we have to thank the institution of State religion. As Cockburn notes in his Journal (ed. 1874, i., pp. 236, 238–9), Churchmen endeavored to prevent the endowment of the education of Dissenters, while Dissenters similarly sought to foil Churchmen. Lord-Advocate Rutherford writes Cockburn in 1839 that "when it is proposed to extend the benefit of education [by giving the Privy Council power to apply £10,000 to the education of Dissenters], there is a cry, responded to in shouts by the House of Commons, that you are undermining and ruining the Church". But Cockburn, a Scotchman who lived his life in Scotland, has a more sweeping indictment against the Church in connexion with the common claim that it has promoted popular education. "It is clear to my mind", he writes ("Journal", ii., 305) "that keeping the popular education any longer in the hands of the Church is nonsense. *The Church has not performed this duty even decently for above a hundred years.*" How much the clerical influence had availed towards spreading that "passion for education" with which the Scottish people is sometimes credited, may be gathered from the same writer's remarks ("Memorials", p. 186) on the Schoolmasters' Act of 1803, which compelled heritors to provide houses for schoolmasters, "but prescribes that the house need not contain more than two rooms, *including the kitchen.* This shabbiness was abused at the time, and seems incredible now [twenty years later]. But Hope [the Lord Advocate] told me that he had considerable difficulty in getting even the two rooms, and that a great majority of the lairds and Scotch members were indignant at being obliged to 'erect palaces for dominies'."

On this matter of popular education, it may be well to point out finally that Scotland stood relatively high in that regard long before the Reformation. "In almost all the periods of the history of Scotland, whatever documents deal with the social condition of the country, reveal a machinery for education always abundant, when compared with any traces of art, or the other elements of education. . . . In documents much older than the War of Independence, the school and the schoolmaster are familiar objects of reference. They chiefly occur in the chartularies of the religious houses; and there is little doubt that the earliest schools were supported out of the superfluous wealth of these houses [ref. to Innes's 'Sketches of Early Scottish History', 134, *et seq*]. . . . In later times, schools are found attached to the burgh corporations. They got the name of grammar-schools, and . . . . Latin was taught in them. . . . . We hear, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, of men acquiring distinction as mere schoolmasters—a sure sign of the respect in which the teacher's mission was held" (Burton, iii., 399-401).

If Scotch Protestants were half as ready to give credit to the Romish Church for what it did for civilization, as they are to magnify the scanty achievement of Presbyterianism, the former body would have a very different reputation from that which it has at present. Those who lay stress on the fancied services of the Presbyterian Church as a reason for keeping up its endowments, never think of mentioning that it was the reviled monks of old who alone fostered agriculture in early feudal times; and that they were far the best landlords of their age (Burton, i., 107-9; citing Innes, "Scotland in the Middle Ages", 138-140, 147). The truth is, that the Catholic Church in Scotland was in the main favorable to general culture, interfering only with religious thought; while its Presbyterian successor was and is hostile to general science and all popular art. To this day it is good for nothing but the propagation of its own dogmas. The series of clerical lectures which have of late years been given in Edinburgh with the professed purpose of spreading a knowledge of the nation's past, and of its distinguished sons, are purely ecclesiastical. The "worthies" they introduce to the public are the otherwise deservedly forgotten fanatics and rhapsodists of the Kirk's early days, extinct volcanoes,

whose remains offer no healthy pabulum for any sound mind. Bigots who taught that unbaptized children would eternally burn in hell are extolled for their spiritual graces; and the whole dust-heap of their polemics is turned over by way of edifying the nineteenth century. Such is "education" as the Church affects it. On the other hand, I have no hesitation in saying that Scotchmen, with all their nationalism, are more generally ignorant of the bygone scientific achievements of men of their own nation than are the general public of almost any other country in the world; and this clearly by reason of their past clericalism. Let any of my Scotch freethinking readers cast about for any popular acquaintance with the lives and doings, or even the names, of Black, Leslie, Hutton, Cullen, and Hunter; and they will see cause to endorse my statement. The first generally accessible account—the first worthy estimate—of these great men collectively is in the work of Buckle. The name of James Watt did indeed get into the books for boys; and Scotchmen know something of Adam Smith, simply because Political Economy fell so largely into Scotch hands, and because Smith's name has been kept in the public eye by newspapers and politicians in connexion with Free Trade; but at this moment there is no popular Scotch edition of the philosophical works of Hume, the greatest thinker Scotland has produced; while the cheap English edition in one volume—the only one obtainable by the average purchaser—though professing to be complete, is actually castrated of the essays on miracles and a future state: a scandal calling for redress, by the way, apart from the issues above discussed. Those of us who have noted these and other facts in connexion with Scotch culture, have our misgivings about the compliments sometimes paid to it.

Enough has been already said to show how deadly has been the power of the Kirk as regards what are at once the most subtle and among the most potent influences of civilisation — the arts. The notorious and barbarous Presbyterian prejudice against church music has suppressed a means of musical culture which has flourished everywhere else throughout the world; so that the undoubted national musical faculty remained till practically the present generation pretty much in the state it had

attained in the Middle Ages; otherwise educated people still seeing the highest musical possibilities in the early ballads. In the matter of the theatre, the Church is not merely guilty of extinguishing the vigorous præ-Reformation drama; she has done her best to starve and stunt it in its modern revival. As soon as the clergy were able, they obtained the suppression of the small theatre established by Allan Ramsay in Edinburgh about the middle of last century; and a noted Presbyterian *Tartufe* of the time even sought to put down Ramsay's venture of a circulating library (Burton, viii., 551; compare Tulloch, St. Giles Lectures, p. 282). And I believe that as regards the position of the drama in the provinces generally, Scotland is, relatively speaking, more backward than she was a hundred years ago, when Burns wrote prologues for companies who performed at Dumfries. I could lay my finger at this moment on half-a-dozen small Scotch towns in which, for sheer lack of a theatre or any other recreation, a large proportion of the youths become unintellectual, sottish, and dissolute. The more ambitious eagerly flock to the large towns; those left behind have no resource but the tap-room. But every attempt made to establish theatres in these towns is met by shrieks from the clergy, predictive of untold contingent demoralisation —in blatant disregard of the demoralisation actually taking place.

This darkening and worsening of life at the behest of bigotry is to-day the main net outcome of clerical influence in Scotland. If the English people has not yet learned how to enjoy itself, the Scotch is still further behind. In 1838, commenting on the Scottish observance of Coronation Day, Cockburn could say of the Scotchman of the people: "The tippling-house is his natural refuge against a system of moral Calvinism which considers the social and public recreation of whole families as dangerous or shameful" ("Journal" i., 187). A slow improvement is going on, but whatever advance may be suggested—whether the Sunday opening of museums or picture galleries, Sunday secular lectures, or Sunday picnics—finds a certain and strenuous opponent in the Kirk. It is the nature of the ecclesiastical mind to make no advance of its own will: its every modification is the result of outside pressure. As Cockburn said at the Disruption time (*Ibid.*, ii., 43),

"Two centuries have not changed the Presbyterian intellect one inch". While educated opinion has progressed immeasurably from the mediæval positions, the Church nominally stands on its old creed; the only denomination which has made the slightest official change being the United Presbyterian — that in which lay influence is strongest. The spirit of the Church goes back rather than forward. Till quite recent times the ecclesiastical tone and practice of rural districts—whatever might go on at Edinburgh—were exactly what they were at the time of the Civil War. We saw how a clergyman was then rebuked by his colleagues for going about his business on *Saturday*—the clerical mind, not content with Sabbatarianism, extending the sacredness of the Sabbath over the day before and the day after; and I can testify that among my own "forbears" of a generation back the same doctrine was in force; the Sabbath gloom being caused to set in on the Saturday afternoon. The whole cult was a petrifaction of life and mind.

After all, perhaps no Scotchman can fully appreciate how far the work of the Kirk has gone—how completely it has taken his race as it were by the throat and choked down its genial impulses. The impulses are certainly there. The people had once cause for their phrase "a kindly Scot": we see it in that antithesis of conviviality which has lived cheek-by-jowl with the fanaticism. Every Scotchman knows the intensity of the strain of good-fellowship in the national character. It comes out in that curious avowal of Cockburn ("Memorials," p. 41): "I doubt if from the year 1811, when I married, I have closed above one day in the month of my town life, at home and alone. It is always some scene of domestic conviviality either in my own house or in a friend's. And this is the habit of all my best friends." It comes out in the almost hysterical good-will and mirth of the New Year time—a manifestation which is now year by year toning down just as the general emotional life of the people is becoming broader and freer. But strangers can perhaps best see the force of the contrary element in the national character, though their judgment may not always be quite intelligent. Foreign observation of any people rarely is. In the comments of the young Niebuhr, during his stay in Edinburgh at the end of last century, there is a certain priggishness,

and indeed a certain bald stupidity, as when he writes ("Life and Letters," English ed., 1852, i., 132) that Scotch people have no deep affection for each other; and that though they are "much more ready and obliging in undertaking trouble for their acquaintance" than Germans are, it is "no great merit in them", seeing that "bodily activity is an enjoyment to them". Still, we must allow some weight to his declaration, "I have never witnessed nor heard of family life full of deep and tender affection, nor of a hearty, enthusiastic, mutual confidence between young men"; and even to his exaggerated statement that he finds among young Englishmen [here meaning Scotchmen in particular] a "universal licentiousness", which he ascribes to a dearth of the better emotional life. He saw the strength of the race as well as its weakness. "The number of vigorous, thinking minds", he writes (*Ibid.*), "is incontestably much larger in this than in most other countries, but the bonds which hold them together are just as much weaker and slighter"—a judgment which is not confuted by any exhibition of national sentiment commonly so-called.

I have seen a curious story of how a Scotch father, dying in the prime of life, said a gentle "Ta-ta" to his young children as he kissed them farewell, and sent them out to play while he breathed his last with his hand in his wife's. There is something in that idiosyncrasy which a Niebuhr could not very well appreciate; but it must be confessed that even such Puritan stoicism in the long run means an extinction of those impulses and faculties which constitute genius. It is an eminently significant fact that the line of Scotchmen of high literary, intellectual, and artistic faculty contains hardly a name that is in friendly association with the national ecclesiasticism. Hume was infidel; Smith was a deist; the clerical historians Robertson and Henry were "moderates"; Adam Ferguson evaded the gown. The other Fergusson, the poet, Burns's predecessor, was obnoxious to the cloth; so was Burns in an eminent degree; Scott's treatment of Presbyterianism, which he never loved, offended most of his countrymen, and brought on him the assault of Dr. McCrie. Even Carlyle, Puritan in blood as he was, could not rub along with the doctrines of the Kirk; Mr. Ruskin's Scotch blood could not reconcile him to the "deadly Muselessness" of Presbyterianism; and

Macaulay's Scotch strain is not appreciable in his character or in his relations with his Edinburgh constituency. To take minor men, Wilson was no Calvinist, and Jeffrey nothing of an evangelical. Dr. John Brown and Hugh Miller are the only Scotchmen of genius I can remember to have been in sympathy with the Kirk; and we knew that in Brown the sympathy was in hereditary alliance with a tendency to insanity; while Miller seems to have broken his heart because he could not reconcile Genesis with geology. And to-day? It is a singular fact that at this moment there is no Scottish writer or artist of European distinction—if we except such a *littérateur* as Professor Masson—resident in Scotland. Our best men, in art, letters, and science, seem to gravitate to England. Even Professor Flint, who has contrived to be heard-of in France and Germany by his questionable compilation on the "Philosophy of History", has publicly lamented the inglorious position of his clerical colleagues in their own pursuit of theology. As Renan has said: "Tedium, stupidity, and mediocrity are the punishment of certain Protestant countries, where, under pretext of good sense and Christian sentiment, art has been suppressed and science treated as something ignoble" ("Les Apôtres," Introd., ed. 1866, p. lxiv.).

I have not sought in these sketches to deal with the question, so often raised in connexion with the disestablishment movement in England, as to the right of the State to meddle with the endowments of the Church. In Scotland the denial of such a right would be too preposterous to be worth a churchman's while. There the entire institution is notoriously on a basis of State legislation and systematic fiscal endowment; and the pleas for the retention of the establishment take perforce a different shape. With the commonest—the formula as to the deep and beneficent union of the Church with the nation's history—I have dealt at large in the foregoing pages; and it need only be said further that if the Church had really done good where we have seen it has only done evil, the fact would be quite pointless in regard to the question of disendowment. A Church, politically speaking, is only a name for the men and women who constitute its membership; and it is with the endowments and privileges of these fellow citizens that we have to do. The rest is abstraction. If there is good

reason to strip the Church's members of undeserved emoluments, no supposed rights or merits of "the Church" can avail a tittle to the contrary.

There is, however, one *quasi*-practical plea sometimes urged on behalf of the Church by such of its members as are Liberal in politics and friendly to liberalism of thought —the claim, namely, that whereas the Dissenting Presbyterian churches must needs be narrow in their doctrine, being subject to the rule of the ignorant, the clergy of the Established Church tend to be broader in their views and more tolerant in their teaching and practice, as being comparatively untrammelled. There is a certain speciousness in this reasoning, and it influences not a few minds in Scotland. It is, however, curiously ill-supported by specific facts. Those who look only at the cases of heresy-hunting in the Free Church reason precipitately that it is the less tolerant of the two, because there seem to be fewer such cases in the Establishment. In point of fact the preponderance is chiefly in respect of the famous case of Professor Robertson Smith; and no Scotchman can well doubt that that distinguished heretic would have been prosecuted just the same if he had been a member of the Establishment. What is true in regard to the latter body is that even its most bigoted clergy are somewhat averse to ventilating questions of heresy for sheer fear of helping the disestablishment movement. Its ministers are sworn to teach certain doctrines, which many of them do not believe; and the more generally this is realised the more widely would it be asked, by Liberals and by bigots alike, on what grounds their endowments should be maintained. But there is a more conclusive answer than this to the contention before us.

During the last few years there have come before the public two politico-religious questions, one of enduring character and interest, the other more transient, but still important—I allude to the case of Mr. Bradlaugh in Parliament and the appointment of Lord Ripon, a Roman Catholic, as Viceroy of India. These questions constituted fair tests of the enlightenment and friendliness to liberty of those parties and individuals who expressed opinions in regard to them. Both, as it happened, came before the assemblies of the Established and Free Churches in Scotland—probably also, though on this head I am

uncertain, before the United Presbyterian Synod. Whatever may in that case have been the vote of the latter body, it is found that "the Established Church Assembly protested against Lord Ripon's appointment, and the proposal to make affirmation free to all members of Parliament, by much larger majorities than were obtained in the Free Assembly" (article in *Edinburgh Evening News*, February 13th, 1882). That is decisive. Whatever measure of light may be possessed by a few clergymen of the Establishment, the great majority, like their brethren of the Church of England, are foes to reasonable freedom, whether of thought, word, or deed.

It cannot, of course, be hoped that the mere turning of the Church's endowments to educational purposes will speedily impair the influence for harm which we have seen that the Church possesses. The Establishment at this moment pretends to much the same "spiritual position" as the Free Church—as shown by the puerile annual mummery of the Royal Commissioner proroguing the Assembly in the name of the Queen while the Moderator prorogues it in the name of Jesus Christ. Its clergy are chosen by popular election, after a preaching match, just as are those of the Dissenting bodies; and while the Free Church, whatever may be the diplomacy of its leaders, is nominally committed to the principle of Establishment, it follows that when the Establishment is made an end of, there will be plenty of the typical clerical spirit left to cramp and confine the national intelligence, to retard art, to resist freedom, and to disseminate a paralysing superstition. Still, the transfer of the endowments will be one positive gain; and we have seen enough to conclude that while an Established Church may have periods of "Moderatism" which partly make for culture and light, the mere presence of its endowments is a constant opportunity for the aggrandisement of that spirit of fanaticism which has never been long asleep in Scotland in modern times. On the whole, that spirit will do less harm when left to itself than when fed and fostered by national funds.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., E.C.—1886.

THOMAS PAINE:

An Investigation.

BY

JOHN M. ROBERTSON.

LONDON:
FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
63 FLEET STREET, E.C.
1888.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ANNIE BESANT AND CHARLES BRADLAUGH,
63 FLEET STREET, E.C.

THOMAS PAINE: AN INVESTIGATION.

In Mr. Leslie Stephen's "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century" there occur a number of allusions to Thomas Paine, and in particular two passages in which the historian discusses Paine's work as an anti-theologian and as a politician, prefacing the second with what purports to be a brief sketch of his later life and an estimate of his character. Mr. Stephen's work is in two volumes; and his account of the "Age of Reason", without biographic elucidation, occurs in the first; the criticism of the "Rights of Man" coming separately, with the elucidation, in the second, where it was necessary to contrast Paine with Burke. The biographical notice, which is extremely brief, presents the markedly hostile version given of Paine's life and character in the professed biography of him by Cheetham, Mr. Stephen making no reference to any other authority, though he shows he is aware of the existence of other Lives. The falsity of Cheetham's and Mr. Stephen's account has been pointed out before now; several subsequent biographies having exposed Cheetham's, and Mr. Stephen's paragraph being indirectly answered for English readers by Mr. Moncure Conway's valuable article in the *Fortnightly Review* of March, 1879. A direct and explicit answer to Mr. Stephen's statements and criticism as a whole, however, seems still awanting; and as his book continues to be a standard source of information on Paine for English readers, such an examination seems worth attempting in the interests of truth and justice.

I quote first Mr. Stephen's biographical paragraph as it appears in his first edition:

"We have already encountered Paine as an assailant of the

religious belief of the day. No ingenuity of hero-worship can represent him as an altogether edifying phænomenon. Indeed, he is commonly made to serve the purpose of a scarecrow in religious tracts. One of his biographers describes his first interviews with the old reprobate after his final flight to America. Paine appeared shabbily dressed, with a beard of a week's growth, and a 'face well carbuncled, fiery as the setting sun'. Sitting over a table loaded with *beer*, brandy, and *a beefsteak* he repeated the introduction of his reply to Watson; a process which occupied half an hour, and was *performed with perfect clearness, in spite of the speaker's intoxication.* The details of his habits during the few remaining years of his life are simply disgusting; he was constantly drunk, filthy beyond all powers of decent expression, brutal to the woman he had seduced from her husband, constantly engaged in the meanest squabbles, and, in short, as disreputable an old wretch as was at that time to be found in New York. Two or three well-meaning persons tried to extort some sort of confession from the dying infidel; but he died in a state of surly adherence to his principles. The wretched carcase, about which he seems to have felt some anxiety was buried in his farm" ("History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," ii. 261).

The "one of his biographers" here cited is Cheetham, whose relations with Paine before he composed Paine's "Life" were those of open and violent enmity; and it is to Cheetham that Mr. Stephen owes his statements as to filthiness and drunkenness. On the points as to whether Paine, immediately after landing from a long voyage, undertaken in a weak state of health—for it was then that Cheetham professes to have first met him—may really have appeared shabbily dressed and unshaven, it seems scarcely necessary to spend inquiry. It is enough to point out that the devotion of one-third of the paragraph of biography in Mr. Stephen's "History" to an enemy's description of Paine, made up of such details as these, is more suggestive of unthinking prejudice than of literary judgment. The "face well carbuncled" I pass over for the moment; and the clause on the "table loaded with *beer*, brandy, and *a beefsteak*" might perhaps be left to dispose of itself, with the slight help of italics. Mr. Stephen is evidently trying to create the impression that Paine's way of life was brutal and disgusting, and to that end he catches at the items in question. Beer and a beefsteak, it will probably be admitted, might innocently appear on any man's table; and even brandy is not un-

known in respectable households in our own time, to say nothing of the drinking usages of Paine's. But the alliterative effect got by coupling it with the beer and the beefsteak is calculated to convey the requisite idea to readers who combine sensitiveness with carelessness, and so the description is produced. Of readers who possess only the former quality I have to ask pardon for pausing over such topics, a passing comment being necessitated by Mr. Stephen's having thought them fit garniture for a "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century".

To come to more important matters, I would ask the reader first to notice the rare verisimilitude of the statement that Paine while in a state of intoxication repeated with "perfect clearness", at half-an-hour's length, the "introduction" of his reply to Watson.[1] Most unprejudiced inquirers would pronounce the story an unplausible falsehood; and a falsehood, I think, it will finally be pronounced when the evidence as to Paine's way of life has been set forth. But by way of prefatory indication of the value of Cheetham's testimony, and of the general trustworthiness of Mr. Stephen's paragraph, it will be expedient to state the facts as to the allegation of Paine's having seduced a woman from her husband and then behaved brutally to her.

There is, I think, only one such story current concerning Paine, and the allusion is doubtless to Madame Bonneville, the wife of one Nicholas Bonneville of Paris, who with her children came to America with Paine when the latter finally returned to his adopted country. Paine had boarded with Bonneville during part of his stay in Paris, and is said to have been "much indebted" to his hospitality. Bonneville had often declared his intention to emigrate to the United States as soon as he could, and when Paine was able to leave France he invited the Bonnevilles to accompany him, which they promptly agreed to do.

"But", says Sherwin, "as Mr. Bonneville could not get ready by the time appointed, it was agreed that his wife and three sons should embark with Mr. Paine, and that their father

[1] All that has been published of Paine's reply to the Bishop of Llandaff might be recited in about half-an-hour, and there is no part that can be marked off as introductory. If Paine recited all or part of what is published, he was recapitulating a close and detailed argument. Mr. Stephen of course attempts no investigation on the point.

should follow them as soon as he conveniently could. Whether this was a design on the part of Bonneville to rid himself of his wife is more than I can say, but it is certain that he never troubled himself about her or the children for some years afterwards, and they were entirely abandoned to the generosity of Mr. Paine. In addition to his estate at New Rochelle, Mr. Paine had likewise a small house with some land attached to it, at Bordentown: these he offered to Mrs. Bonneville, and proposed to establish her as a schoolmistress, but this she declined. Mr. Paine was therefore charged with her entire maintenance, and that of the children, an act of kindness which he cheerfully performed. . . . It is a fact that they scarcely ever lived together after our author's return to America" (W. T. Sherwin's "Life of Thomas Paine", 1819, pp. 208–210).

Sherwin is partly in error as to the "entire maintenance", since it appears that Madame Bonneville gave lessons in French to help to maintain herself. But as to the substantial truth of his story there can be no reasonable doubt. Taken by itself, it might stand as an unsupported testimony by a friend of Paine; but it is sufficiently made good by the result of the legal proceedings instituted by Madame Bonneville against Cheetham when the latter published his slanderous work after Paine's death. Cheetham declared Madame Bonneville to be Paine's mistress, offering no proof save an angry letter from one Carver, written after a quarrel with Paine. On the action for slander being raised, Cheetham's counsel admitted the falsehood of the charge, and pleaded simply that Carver's letter justified Cheetham, as a historian, in repeating the statement. At first it was pleaded that the statement was true, but when "several ladies of the first distinction, whose daughters had been entrusted to the care of Madame Bonneville to learn the French language, appeared in court, and attested to the unblemished character of this much-injured female", this plea was abandoned, Carver besides backing out of his statement under examination. Further, Carver later published the avowal that his letter had been written in anger, and that it was "first printed by Cheetham without my consent for base purposes, after he became a tory and political turncoat"; also printing a letter of reconciliation he had addressed to Paine when the latter was on his deathbed, with the remark: "This shows what opinion I had of him; I think he was one of the greatest men that ever

lived". (See the documents in the preface to G. Vale's "Life of Thomas Paine", New York, 1841.) The judge in the libel case, in summing up for the jury, took occasion to remind them that Cheetham's book was calculated to aid the cause of Christianity. The jury, however, brought in a verdict against him with £100 damages; and Cheetham, who had admitted the falsity of his statement, was ordered to expunge it from later editions of his book. (See "Refutation of the Calumnies on the Character of Thomas Paine", Providence, R. I. 1830, p. 2.) Thus a wholly or partly Christian jury pronounced the story a slander; Cheetham and his informant alike withdrew from it; and it is left for Mr. Stephen to revive it in an important work without a word of qualification or an attempt at inquiry.

It is worth noting, finally, as to the Bonneville episode, that Paine left some money by his will to Nicolas Bonneville, and the bulk of his property to Madame Bonneville, in trust for her and her children, "in order that she may bring them well up, give them good and useful learning, and instruct them in their duty to God and the practice of morality". The aspersion thrown out by Mr. Stephen as to Paine's "brutality" to Madame Bonneville rests partly on Carver's letter, in which Paine appears as disputing a payment on Madame Bonneville's account, partly on other statements of Cheetham. We have seen something of that authority's trustworthiness; but there is yet further evidence to be taken.

Cheetham's Life of Paine is not only thus discredited on one important point by explicit proofs: it was recognised and proclaimed as collectively untrustworthy by orthodox American writers in Paine's own time and later. I quote first from Mr. Conway:

"It is important . . . . to state that the most eminent Christian writers in America were not deceived by these libels [as to Madame Bonneville]. Thus, the Rev. Solomon Southwick, editor of the *Christian Visitor* when Cheetham's book appeared, wrote: 'Had Thomas Paine been guilty of any crime, we should be the last to eulogise his memory.' But we cannot find that he was ever guilty of any other crime than that of advancing his opinions freely upon all subjects connected with public liberty and happiness . . . . We may safely affirm that Paine's conduct in America was that of a real patriot. In the French Convention he displayed the same pure and disinterested

spirit . . . . His life, it is true, was written by a ministerial hireling, who strove in vain to blacken his moral character. The late James Cheetham likewise wrote his life, and we have no hesitation in saying that we knew perfectly well at the time the motives of that author for writing and publishing a work which, we have every reason to believe, is a libel almost from beginning to end. In fact, Cheetham had become tired of this country, and had formed a plan to return to England and become a ministerial editor in opposition to Cobbett, and his *Life of Paine* was written to pave his way back again.' " (Art. on "Thomas Paine", in *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1879, p. 400, citing the "Testimonials to Thomas Paine", compiled by J. N. Moreau, 1861—an American pamphlet, not in the British Museum).

The impartial judgment of Paine's own generation is endorsed by that of the next. An unsigned article on "Thomas Paine's Second Appearance in the United States" appears in the *Atlantic Monthly* for July, 1859. Its author thinks (p. 16) that "The 'Age of Reason' is a shallow deistical essay, in which the author's opinions are set forth . . . . in a most offensive and irreverend style"; that he "drank more brandy than was good for him"; and (p. 13) that he "was no exception to the general rule, that we find no persons so intolerant and illiberal as men professing Liberal principles". There is here small prejudice in Paine's favor. But the same unfriendly critic says: "We suspect that most of our readers, if they cannot date back to the first decade of the century, will find, when they sift their information, that they have only a speaking acquaintance with Thomas Paine, and can give no good reason for their dislike of him" (p. 15). And this is how he comments on the biography by Cheetham:

"This libellous performance was written shortly after Paine's death. It was intended as a peace offering to the English Government. The ex-hatter had made up his mind to return home, and he wished to prove the sincerity of his conversion from Radicalism by trampling on the remains of its high-priest. So long as Cheetham remained in good standing with the Democrats, Paine and he were fast friends; but when he became heretical and schismatic on the Embargo question, some three or four years later, and was formally read out of the party, Paine laid the rod across his back with all his remaining strength. He had vigor enough left, it seems, to make the *Citizen* [edited by Cheetham] smart, for Cheetham cuts and stabs with a spite which shows that the work was as agreeable

to his feelings as useful to his plans. His reminiscences must be read *multis cum granis*" (*Id.*, p. 12).

The reader will now probably not hesitate to accept the statement made by Mr. Vale in his "Life of of Paine" (p. 2) that it "was the opinion of the intimate friend of Cheetham, Mr. Charles Christian, who gave this relation to Mr. John Fellows and others whom we have seen, and from whom we have learned this fact", that Cheetham meant his book "as a passport to the British treasury favor."

I have thus far dealt with Mr. Stephen's account of Paine as it appears in the first edition of his book, for the moment excluding considerations of certain alterations which he has silently made in his second edition. And I have taken this course on two grounds; first, that the former version is still in the hands of many readers, whose attention has not been publicly called to the partial retractations Mr. Stephen makes; second, that he has made his qualifications in a manner that only aggravates the offence of his first misstatement. Let the reader judge. The alterations are as follows: (1) For "one of his biographers" we now read "a hostile biographer", the rest of the passage being left unaltered down to and including the word "principles". Then we have these sentences:

"The portrait is drawn by an enemy, and *represents what we may call the orthodox version* of the last days of a notorious infidel. Paine was *not likely to receive full justice from his adversaries*, and his admirers *urge* that his career was sincere and disinterested."

Yet while these qualifications are introduced, the "enemy's" picture is left as it was at first drawn; the expressions which were first used with the most grossly opprobrious intent are left unchanged, and the reader is left to settle for himself how much he will believe of the disgusting charges made, Mr. Stephen simply suggesting that an enemy was "not likely" to do "full justice"! I do not know a more extraordinary piece of procedure in literary history. If the story first told was an enemy's, and is only "what we may call the orthodox version" of a Freethinker's life, why, in the name of common decency, was it

allowed to stand? Does Mr. Stephen, like the average Christian bigot, owe neither truth nor justice to an infidel? His first paragraph was bad enough in all conscience. His discovery that Cheetham was Paine's enemy would have been arrived at by most men in his place at the first glance through Cheetham's book; but he apparently only reached it after the publication of Mr. Conway's article. Yet though that article not only revealed this fact, but showed Cheetham's absolute untrustworthiness all round, Mr. Stephen has gone to no other source for his facts, has left his pages befouled with half-admitted falsehoods, neither standing to them nor withdrawing them, and has made no overt avowal that his first edition has at this point undergone alteration. Such a course only adds to the need for exposing the baselessness of the whole story. He who would defend Paine must still furnish the full disproof just as if the first were the only edition of Mr. Stephen's book; and in view of the fashion in which the matter is handled in the second, it is very meet that Mr. Stephen should receive in full what discredit attaches to his production of both versions. It is difficult to say which shows the less readiness to deal justly by the memory of a man held in common odium.

Evidence has been led at length as to the notorious untrustworthiness of Cheetham's book, the venality of his general motives, and his bitter enmity to Paine, though it is not easy to understand how any critic of ordinary fairness of mind, after reading (or even dipping into) Cheetham's book, could require much evidence of its worthlessness. It is on the very face of it a bitter attack on a dead man's memory by his enemy, an attack exceptionally scurrilous even for that time, in which unscrupulous slander went perhaps further than it has ever done in England before or since. Of a previous American "Life" of Paine, nominally by "Francis Oldys", Mr. Edward Smith has observed in his Life of Cobbett (ii. 210, *note*) that it was "one of the most horrible collections of abuse which even that venal day produced". That book was written in reality by George Chalmers, then one of the clerks of the Board of Plantation, to the order of Lord Hawksbury, afterwards Lord Liverpool, who paid or at least promised him £500 for the work (Sherwin, *pref.*). Such transactions were not uncommon in the period, and a historian of English

Thought might have been expected as a matter of course to be on his guard, accordingly, in reading any Life of such a man as Paine. And Cheetham's book, I repeat, is so gross in its aspersions, so patently malignant in its general drift, that no reader of average judgment, unless much swayed by prejudice, can well suppose it to be a true record. Its slander is the slander of the slums; obscene falsehood retailed with the zest of prostitutes in their cups. To a healthy mind, I should think, some of Cheetham's hearsay and other stories would be a decisive proof, not that Paine was drunken or dirty, but that Cheetham was an offensive blackguard. But since Mr. Stephen, even after remonstrance, declines to make up his mind on this head, and as he is a writer of distinction, I will cite some further evidence to show that Paine was not what he still half-insinuates him to be.

It is often assumed even by Freethinkers who esteem Paine's memory that in his latter years he sometimes "drank more than was good for him". Mr. Conway, like Sherwin, has accepted the tradition to that effect, sensibly pointing out, however, its small virtual importance in the eyes of just-minded people. There are, nevertheless, very strong reasons for doubting whether there is any more positive truth in this tradition than in any of the other stories to Paine's discredit. I quote the temperate and impressive summing-up of Mr. Vale:

"In commencing our inquiries we really thought the fact that Mr. Paine was a drunkard in old age was well established. In seeking, however, for the proofs of this we arrive at a very different conclusion." "It is by [Cheetham] that the public have been informed that Paine was drunken and dirty in his person; and so industriously and faithfully have the clergy preached and circulated these calumnies, that we shall scarcely be believed in contradicting them on the very best evidence, that of his companions now alive, and in some cases the very men whom Cheetham impudently names as sources of his information. Thus Mr. Jarvis, the celebrated painter, with whom Mr. Paine lived, informs us distinctly that Mr. Paine was neither dirty in his habits nor drunken; nay, he goodhumoredly added that *he* always drank a great deal more than ever Paine did. Mr. John Fellows lived in the same house with Mr. Paine above a twelvemonth, and was his intimate friend for many years after his return to this country, and never saw him but once even elevated with liquor, and then he had been to a

dinner party. We know more than twenty persons who are more or less acquainted with Mr. Paine, and not one of whom ever saw him in liquor. His habit appears to have been to take one glass of rum and water with sugar in it, after dinner, and another after supper. His limit at one period, when at Rochelle, was one quart of rum a week, for himself and friends, for Mr. Paine was rather penurious in his old age. This, and this alone, is the only moral fault we find in his character, and we wish to be his impartial historian. His manner of life at this time we get from Mr. Burger, a respectable watchmaker in New York, but then a clerk in the only store at Rochelle, who served Mr. Paine with his liquor, and waited upon him when sick, and drove him about the neighborhood at the request of his employer, and thus saw much of his social habits. This gentleman never saw Mr. Paine intoxicated. Carver, with whom Paine lived, but from whom he parted in anger, is the only man we know who has not spoken distinctly on the subject; and he remarks that 'Paine was like other men [at that period] he would sometimes take too much'! But Carver had unfortunately committed himself on this subject in an angry letter, the same on which Cheetham based his libel. In fact, this letter is the groundwork for all Cheetham's calumnies" (Vale's Life of Paine, pref. pp. 12—14: cf. pp. 142, 163).

People who are scrupulous in weighing testimony may feel that even this is not decisive proof that Paine never in his life drank to excess; but it will probably satisfy even the majority of Christians as to the untruth of Cheetham's assertion, reproduced by Mr. Stephen, that Paine was a habitual drunkard. Is it necessary, further, to disprove the slander as to the habits "filthy beyond all powers of decent expression"? I will not quote the beastly gossip on which the decent Mr. Stephen founds his phrase, but I will quote again from Mr. Conway:

"Paine was described by Aaron Burr, hypercritical in such matters, as a gentleman; and the sense in which he was so may be understood from a passage in one of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's letters from Paris to his mother: 'I lodge with my friend Paine; we breakfast, dine, and sup together. The more I see of his interior the more I like and respect him. I cannot express how kind he has been to me. There is a simplicity of manner, a goodness of heart, and a strength of mind in him that I never knew a man before to possess'" (*Art. cited*, p. 409).

It is not for a vindicator of Paine, answering Mr. Stephen, to conceal any known facts; and I will mention that in the

literature of the subject there is one piece of evidence as to Paine's having been in one short period of his life somewhat careless of his domestic amenities. A Mr. Yorke, who knew Paine in England, published in 1802 a volume of "Letters from France", in which he tells how he visited his friend after he had been released from imprisonment. He was received by Paine in a room, not a bedroom, which he describes as exceedingly dirty, the only details given being, however, that

"the chimney hearth was an heap of dirt; there was not a speck of cleanliness to be seen; three shelves were filled with pasteboard boxes, each labelled after the manner of a Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Correspondance Americaine*, *Brittannique*, *Française; Notices Politiques; Le citoyen Français*, etc. In one corner of the room stood several huge bars of iron, curiously shaped, and two large trunks; opposite the fireplace, a board covered with pamphlets and journals, having more the appearance of a dresser in a scullery. Such was the wretched habitation", etc. ("Letters from France in 1802", by Henry Redhead York, 1804, ii. 339-340. See the passage also in Sherwin's "Life", pp. 188-9).

Mr. Yorke states that he "never sat down in such a filthy apartment in the whole course of his life", which is perfectly credible, he being a person of means; but the reader will see that even this statement does not make out Paine to have been generally offensive in his habits. Paine was at that moment preparing to return to America, as Mr. Yorke goes on to intimate; the "bars of iron" were parts of his model iron bridge; and his trunks and papers were presumably packed for transport. The room was not Paine's living-room, and in the circumstances it will be intelligible to most people that without becoming demoralised he should let such an apartment remain unswept. Beyond this Mr. York has not a word to say against the habits of his old acquaintance, though like many other Englishmen at the time he had become conservative in his opinions, and was a good deal worried by Paine's freethinking. He makes an explanation, however, which would decently account for worse carelessness than he tells of. "I was forcibly struck", he says, "with his altered appearance. Time seemed to have made dreadful ravages with his whole frame, and a settled melancholy was visible on his countenance." And this

recalls a circumstance of importance which is not disclosed by Mr. Stephen's biographic notice.

Paine, it will be remembered, after being eagerly welcomed in France and made a member of the National Convention, came under the displeasure of the extreme Jacobin party by strongly opposing the execution of Louis XVI., such a step being repugnant to his essentially humane cast of mind. Like so many others, he was cast in prison at the order of Robespierre's Committee of Public Safety. The accident by which, on one occasion, he escaped execution—a mark being made on the inside instead of the outside of his cell door—is well known. But it is less well known that during his imprisonment of eleven months he not only had a violent and almost fatal fever (which again preserved him from execution) but became permanently affected with an abscess in the side, which during the remainder of his life caused him much pain. Now, if a man thus afflicted had really fallen into a habit of drinking too much, or of neglecting appearances, or of even worse slovenliness, a fair-minded critic would have felt it only just to mention the fact of his painful disease. And if, further, a man so situated labored under Paine's grief of feeling that the great cause in which he believed had utterly wrecked itself in France, such a critic would further have recognised that a resort to strong drink on the sufferer's part was a pathetic and painful, rather than a crudely disgraceful proceeding. And if, finally, such a sufferer, on returning to his adopted country, of whose freedom he was one of the most influential founders, saw himself shunned and vilified by old associates on account of his conscientious religious opinions, the same hypothetic just-minded critic would have seen in the fact a very adequate apology for indulgence in stimulants. But Mr. Stephen, while believing in the story of Paine's intemperance, hints at none of these circumstances; and after all, as has been pointed out, the alleged indulgence did not really take place.

We have seen evidence that Paine's habits were not drunken in America even in his last darkened and lonely days. There is equally good proof that his habits were sober in Paris. Joel Barlow, the author of that defunct epic "The Columbiad", was applied to by Cheetham for

evidence as to Paine's habits in Paris, where Barlow had been one of his intimates. "He was a great drunkard here", wrote Cheetham from New York, "and Mr. M——, a merchant of this city, who lived with him when he was arrested by order of Robespierre, tells me he was intoxicated when that event happened" (Sherwin, Appendix, p. xxxiii). This letter, as Mr. Vale has pointed out, with similar hearsays, misled Barlow, who had never been in Paine's neighborhood after leaving Paris, into believing that the latter had really become latterly intemperate, and he expresses this belief in his answer. But he is explicit as to Paine's sobriety in Paris:

"I never heard before that Paine was intoxicated that night. Indeed, the officers brought him directly to my house, which was two miles from his lodgings, and about as much from the place where he had been dining. He was not intoxicated when they came to me. . . . . You ask what company he kept—he always kept the best, both in England and France, till . . . . he conceived himself neglected and despised by his former friends in the United States. . . . . Thomas Paine, *as a visiting acquaintance and as a literary friend, the only points of view in which I knew him,* was one of the most instructive men I ever have known. . . . . He was always charitable to the poor beyond his means . . . ." (Sherwin, Appendix, pp. xxxvii–viii).

The remaining items in Mr. Stephen's biographical paragraph are the phrases as to "the meanest squabbles", the "surly adherence to his principles", and the "wretched carcase, about which he seems to have felt some anxiety". The first I will let pass in the present connexion, admitting simply that Paine, broken in health and disordered in nerves, had some quarrels. The "constantly" is Mr. Stephen's own characteristic touch. The "surliness" consisted in this, that Paine, vexed in his last painful hours by the indecent intrusion of Mr. Stephen's "well-meaning persons", sharply dismissed one of the most brutally offensive, and finally gave orders that they should all be excluded. One old lady he had previously turned away with a grimly humorous comment which even Mr. Stephen would hardly call surly. One other lady there was to whom he was indeed stern. She had once been his intimate friend and correspondent, but during his stay in France she had married, and when he returned to America she and her husband were among those who refused to

resume his acquaintance. During his last illness she was moved to visit him; but when he saw her he refused to shake hands, saying, "You have neglected me, and I beg you will leave the room". She went out into the garden, the story goes, and wept bitterly; and we may believe, I think, that had the life-weary Paine seen her tears he would have relented.

It is true, as Mr. Stephen puts it in his first edition, that Paine's "wretched carcase" was buried in his farm. But the "anxiety", as to which the historian offers no particulars, had merely consisted in a wish to be buried in the graveyard of the Quakers, in whose denomination Paine had been brought up, his father having been of that persuasion. "Though he did not think well of any Christian sect, he thought better of the Quakers than of any other." The Quakers refused the request, and Paine, who in his dying state was "affected considerably" by the refusal, was buried in his own ground. I can hardly trust myself to characterise the kind of criticism which can only describe this as showing "anxiety" about a "miserable carcase", withdrawing the statement later, evidently not with regret for having made it, but simply to make room in the page for a few lines necessarily added. One has a difficulty, indeed, in passing fitting judgment on Mr. Stephen's two accounts of Paine as wholes. One recalls the story of the Duke of Wellington's attitude towards the performance of a careless officer who, by disobeying an important order, placed the army for a time in dire jeopardy. "What did you say?" asked a friend to whom he afterwards related the episode. "Oh, by God, I said nothing!" was his Grace's answer. That were perhaps the best course with Mr. Stephen. But I believe I shall have the support of any unbiassed literary man who examines the matter, in saying that the biographical paragraph I have dealt with in Mr. Stephen's book, alike in its original and in its amended form, is a disgrace to literature.

It is hardly necessary, of course, to express the belief that Mr. Stephen would not have written what he did at first if he had properly investigated the matter. One does not for a moment compare him to Cheetham, whose slanders he so recklessly retailed. One simply says that, having erred first through culpable prejudice, and still more culpable carelessness, he had not the candor later to make

righteous amends even when his error had been made fairly plain. It would seem as if, having once judged unjustly on insufficient knowledge, he cannot disabuse his mind of his first impressions. But in our further examination of his non-biographical observations on Paine we shall, I fear, see cause to deny him credit for dealing fairly even with matters which were all along fully before him. His remaining criticisms not only commit that kind of injustice which is disputable as turning on matters of opinion, but once more, and this time with no qualifications, injustice which is indisputable, as consisting of flat misrepresentation of matters of fact. The latter I will first deal with.

Though it is only in contrasting Paine with Burke that Mr. Stephen avails himself of the help of Cheetham, his earlier notices betray no tendency to show fair play to the unpopular infidel. The following is from the passage which introduces Paine in the theological section:

"Good Englishmen expressed their disgust for the irreverent infidel by calling him Tom, and the name still warns all men that its proprietor does not deserve even posthumous civility. Paine indeed is, in a sense, but the echo of Collins and Woolston; but the tone of the speaker is altered. . . . . The early deists wrote for educated men. Paine is appealing to the mob. . . . . His ignorance was vast, and his language brutal; but he had the gift of a true demagogue, the power of wielding a fine vigorous English, a fit vehicle for fanatical passion. His tracts may be set without too (*sic*) much disadvantage beside the attack upon Wood's half-pence, or the best pieces of Cobbett" ("History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century", i. 458).

It was thus presumably by way of showing he was a "good Englishman" that Mr. Stephen himself repeatedly names Paine "Tom" in his incidental allusions; and if scrupulous incivility to the dead unbeliever will suffice, he certainly ought to stand well with his orthodox countrymen. It will be noticed that where, as in the foregoing paragraph, he has occasion to accord such praise as it is impossible for a rationalist decently to withhold, Mr. Stephen is careful to so phrase it that it shall have a certain flavor of detraction. Thus Paine's fine vigorous English must needs be further labelled as a "fit vehicle for fanatical passion". Now, if fanatical passion be an offset to a man's literary power, there is no case in which

more deduction must be made than in that of Burke, who in his later utterances on the French Revolution carried such passion to an extent hardly attained in any important composition of the period, and certainly not by Paine. Yet it never occurs to Mr. Stephen in criticising Burke, for whom he has an extreme admiration, to make such a qualification concerning him. Again, if Paine be a demagogue in that he wrote like Swift in the Drapier Letters, Swift is properly to be termed a demagogue in the same connexion. But I do not recall that Mr. Stephen, in his book on Swift, ever thought it necessary to bestow on the Dean the epithet in question. On the contrary, even in admitting that the Drapier Letters contained many falsehoods, Mr. Stephen puts it that the Dean "went to work with unscrupulous *audacity of statement*, guided by the *keenest strategical instinct*" ("Swift", p. 154). These are small matters, but they are illustrative of Mr. Stephen's critical practice.

Paine, says Mr. Stephen, wrote for the mob. He did indeed appeal to the general population, who were habitually appealed to by the Church he wished to overthrow; but anyone not bent on casting epithets at him would see, I think, that he never appealed to "the mob" in the sense of striving to stir the passions of the unreasoning. I should say there is at least as much appeal to reason in any one of Paine's chief works as in Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution", though the latter certainly appealed more to upper-class sentiment. And Wesley and Whitefield daily appealed to "the mob" in the true sense of the term, since they addressed those who could not read, and those on whom sheer argument would have been lost. But Mr. Stephen never uses the word in connexion with Methodism. In that regard we are told that "all *warmth of sentiment* had passed to the side of Wesley and Whitefield" as compared with preachers like Blair (ii. 346); Whitefield, the great mob orator of evangelicalism, is classed as an "enthusiast" (378), and his power is "dramatic rather than . . . . intellectual"—but not demagogic or fanatical; and while Wesley's writing is "full of a doctrine which *frequently leads to* an unlovely superstition", yet "as clearly it implies a vivid sentiment, never to be despised for its ugly clothing" (ii. 432). It is only when a man's sentiment is unpopular that it is

to be despised for its clothing, in Mr. Stephen's critical system.

Let us come to more precise issues. We are told that Paine is "*in a sense* but the *echo* of Collins and Woolston, but the *tone of the speaker is altered*"—a choice Hibernicism, better worth preserving than most of Mr. Stephen's sayings on Paine. But when the critic asserts that Collins and Woolston wrote for educated men as compared with Paine, we are on another ground. Will the reader believe that Mr. Stephen had already pointed out that Collins had discredited his cause by translating the Latin word *idiotis* in the well-known edict of Anastasius concerning the *idiotis evangelistis*, by the English form "idiotic"; and that the critic had also referred to "poor mad Woolston" as the "most scandalous of the deists" (i. 87)? Chubb he similarly described as "the good Salisbury tallow-chandler, who ingenuously confesses, whilst criticising the Scriptures, that he knows no language but his own". Take Mr. Stephen's detailed criticisms of Woolston:

"The argument [against miracles] was the more offensive because there is no sign that Woolston appreciated the difficulties which may be suggested by criticism, or by *a priori* objections to miracles. His contention is simply that the narratives are on the face of them preposterous. . . . . This strange performance would have been sufficient of itself to raise doubts of its author's sanity." "Through six straggling discourses, Woolston attempts to make fun of the miracles. There are, at intervals, queer gleams of distorted sense, and even of literary power, in the midst of his buffoonery. Occasionally he hits a real blot" [the miracles in general not being blots]; "more frequently he indulges in the most absurd quibbles, and throughout he shows almost as little approximation to a genuine critical capacity as to reverential appreciation of the beauty of many of the narratives. He is a mere buffoon jingling his cap and bells in a sacred shine; and his strange ribaldry is painful even to those for whom the supernatural glory of the temple has long faded away. Even where some straggling shreds of sense obtrude themselves, the language is obtrusively coarse and occasionally degenerates into mere slang" (ii. 229-232).

Observe that whereas Woolston in one set of passages is pronounced mad, in another he is criticised as being sane, so as to leave the most unpleasant impression about freethinking in the reader's mind. Now compare

with this one of Mr. Stephen's explicit criticisms of Paine.

"Paine . . . . reproduces the objections to the Bible which occurred to him on a hasty reading, or which had reached him through the diffused scepticism of the time. It must be added, however, that such arguments might be effective enough with popular readers who regarded every letter of the English version as directly dictated by the Holy Ghost; and *moreover* keen mother-wit supplies many deficiencies, and Paine's reasoning *often hits real blots*, whilst it *loses little* (*!*) *by not being smothered* in masses of erudition. His reasoning, indeed, though defaced by much ribaldry, is *simply the translation* into popular language of a theory expounded by more accomplished critics. . . . . He is *apparently ignorant that anything of the kind had been said before*; and makes no reference to the deists, such as Tindal or Morgan, who had put his arguments into more decent language. . . . . Paine's creed . . . . is simply the creed of all the deists of the eighteenth century. Paine's peculiarity consists in the freshness with which he comes upon very old discoveries, and the vehemence with which he announces them" (i. 459-461).

Here, contradictions apart, Paine is characterised in terms almost identical with those previously applied to Woolston, except that he is made out much the better reasoner of the two. But, it being necessary to discredit him in the long run, we later learn that the ribald and futile Woolston wrote for educated men, and Paine only for the mob. I need now hardly remark to careful readers that Mr. Stephen's account of any unpopular freethinker is not much more to be trusted, without close enquiry, than his account of Paine.

When Mr. Stephen observes that Paine's "ignorance was vast"—a phrase which might loosely be used of any man—we are forced to assume that he has in view some of the matters on which he himself expressly comments, as this:

"He [Paine] explains . . . . that his chronology is taken from the dates printed on the margins of the 'larger Bibles', which he apparently supposes to be part of the original documents" (i. 459).

I am here once more in a difficulty as to the proper way of answering Mr. Stephen. The plain truth is that this is a scandalous perversion of the plain fact. So far from there

being the slightest reason for believing that Paine made the incredible blunder here wantonly charged on him, the passage itself shows that he did no such thing. It runs thus:

"The chronology that I shall use is the Bible chronology, for I mean not to go out of the Bible for evidence of anything, but to make the Bible itself prove historically and chronologically that Moses is not the author of the books ascribed to him. It is *therefore* proper that I inform the reader (such an one at least as may not have opportunity of knowing it) that in the larger Bibles, and also in some smaller ones, there is a series of chronology printed in the margin of every page, for the purpose of showing how long the historical matters stated in each page *happened, or are supposed to have happened, before Christ*, and consequently the distance of time between one historical circumstance and another."

Will Mr. Stephen next tell us that Paine, in the very act of analysing the biblical books with a view to questions of authorship, held that a pre-Christian scribe wrote in his margin the year B.C. in which the events he narrated were "supposed to have happened"? I doubt whether wilful dishonesty could reach worse results in the way of false witness than Mr. Stephen contrives to get to through mere carelessness and prejudice.

Take next the derisive passage following:

"Wishing to prove that much of [the Bible] is so poetical that even the translation retains 'the air and style of poetry', and remembering that some of his readers may consider that poetry means rhyming, he [Paine] adds to a verse from Isaiah a line of his own composition" (i. 459).

Let me remind the reader that in the passage in question is a footnote, which Paine begins thus: "As there are many readers who do not see that a composition is poetry unless it be in rhyme, it is for their information that I add this note". That is to say, the footnote is expressly added for the benefit of uncultured readers. Is this a proof either of gross ignorance or of fatuity? If Lord Selborne teaches a Bible class, does this prove him unfit to hold the Chancellorship? I am not arguing that Paine was a scholar. On the contrary, we know that he read comparatively little, his power lying in his original faculty of thought and speech. But I observe that it matters nothing to Mr. Stephen whether Paine were well-informed or not: either

way he will contrive to belittle him. Take as illustration the following sentences:

"The most remarkable argument in the second part [of the 'Age of Reason'] is a collection of the various passages which, if occurring in the original, show that the so-called books of Moses cannot have been composed by Moses or his contemporaries. . . . . *The remarks are creditable to Paine's shrewdness.* The same difficulties had been suggested long before by Spinoza and by Newton; but those writers were apparently beyond the range of his reading" (i. 461).

Anybody but Mr. Stephen, I think, would have admitted that if Paine detected for himself, without any help, a number of the proofs that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, he would have given proof of great critical acuteness. Mr. Stephen believes he did so discover them, but will only concede that the discovery showed "shrewdness"; just as elsewhere he follows the impudently absurd academic usage of making out good reasoning to be unworthy of respectful comment when it is arrived at by "mother-wit". Thus can a learned historian arrive at the sage decision that a man's reasoning "loses *little* by not being smothered". Judicious concession! With Mr. Stephen, it is rather better to be obtuse with culture than clear-headed without it. But in the passage before us he contrives to err in his facts in one direction as well as to pervert justice in another. Paine *did* know something of Spinoza's criticism of the Bible. In the second part of the *Age of Reason*, the very section to which Mr. Stephen alludes, he states that he has "seen the opinion of two Hebrew commentators, Abenezra and Spinoza", on the subject of the authorship of the book of Job. It is indeed a small matter, compared with the others, that Mr. Stephen should assume Paine to have had no help from Spinoza, since in any case it is certain he had not much; but it is interesting to have this further light on Mr. Stephen's way of going to work. It now appears that he had not thought it worth while to do more than glance into the book he was criticising.

Take yet another of his imputations:

"The 'Age of Reason' indeed sometimes amuses by the author's impudent avowals of ignorance. In the last part, he mentions a few authorities, and appears to have been dabbling in some inquiries as to the origin of the Jewish and Christian

faiths. This, however, was an afterthought. In the first part he avows, with some ostentation, that he has not even a copy of the Bible. Quoting Addison's paraphrase of the nineteenth psalm, he adds, 'I recollect not the prose, and when I write this I have not the opportunity of seeing it'. Before the publication of the second part, he had 'furnished himself with a Bible and a Testament', and found them to be 'much worse books than he had conceived'" (i. 458-9).

Again, what are the facts? The first part of the *Age of Reason* was written by Paine in Paris while in hourly expectation of arrest and consequent death; it being his earnest wish to leave behind him a protest against the irrationality of the popular religion. The manuscript was only finished a few hours before the arrest came. English or any other Bibles were not likely to be very abundant in Paris at that time, and Paine expressly states in the First Part that he "had not the opportunity of seeing one", and again in the preface to the Second Part that he "could not procure any". To call this an impudent avowal of ignorance is just to add one more to Mr. Stephen's sins against literary good morals. Paine knew the Bible in general extremely well: he had been brought up on it, and he had an excellent memory; only it required the later perusal with an emancipated mind to see all its flaws. In any case, the First Part of the *Age of Reason* is a general argument such as any thinker might fitly write in his study without specially consulting the Bible at all. It attacked central principles and not details. And the fact remains, as Paine was entitled to boast, that he had "produced a work that no Bible believer, though writing at his ease, with a library of Church books about him, can refute"; whatever Mr. Stephen may choose to suggest by the safe process of insinuation. One would have thought that a book of such earnestness and force, written under such circumstances, would extort from any critic of repute an admission of the writer's elevation of mind: that the man who wrote such a treatise while in hourly expectation of death on the scaffold would receive at least credit for courage and magnanimity. But no: all that Mr. Stephen can discover is an "impudent avowal of ignorance".

Mr. Stephen's language implies, if words mean anything, that Paine's arguments were weighty mainly as against those who believed in the literal inspiration of the English

version of the Scriptures. A criticism so egregiously wide of the mark is really not worth detailed refutation; but as so often happens with him, Mr. Stephen himself supplies the answer. Paine's arguments, deduced from a "hasty" reading of the Bible, while mainly adapted to the most ignorant believers, yet have their defects largely atoned for by "keen mother-wit", and "*moreover*" often "hit real blots". It is inimitable, this blowing hot and cold in the same breath: I know no rival to Mr. Stephen in the art. But the triumph of his method is attained only in this sentence:—

> "Paine's book announced a startling fact, against which all the flimsy collection of conclusive proofs were powerless. It amounted to a proclamation that the creed no longer satisfied the instincts of rough common sense any more than the intellects of cultivated scholars" (i. 463).

Here the historian's exquisitely balanced mind contrives to imply at once that the orthodox answers to Paine were one and all flimsy, and yet that Paine's being right was no great proof of his being a competent thinker. It was only "rough common-sense"!

Need I here state that the implication as to the "cultivated scholars" having generally seen the truth before Paine is not true? The general effect of Mr. Stephen's own book is to show that there were cultivated scholars in abundance who could not see what Paine perceived by his deplorably unvarnished common sense. The critic's favorite, Burke, could not see it, remaining a blind and unreasoning believer; the scholarly Horsley had just been showing, in controversy with Priestley, that scholarship could very well be on the side of irrational faith.

When all is said Mr. Stephen is obliged to admit of Paine's "Age of Reason"—and I fear the avowal must have cost him discomfort—that the book made powerfully for righteousness as well as for right reason. In a passage considerably earlier than the detailed notice of the book, he had observed that "Wesley from one side, and Tom Paine from another, forced more serious thoughts upon the age" (i. 273)—this after "the attack and defence" of previous writers had "lowered the general tone of religious feeling", and generally furthered intellectual stagnation. And the admission is once more made later on.

Mr. Stephen is a critic not devoid of conscientiousness; and when he really feels a truth he does not hesitate to state it. But his idiosyncrasies will not let him reduce his criticism in order even by a methodical balancing of pros and cons: he must needs leave only a distracted series of contradictions. This is the note of his criticism in general, but least of all could he contrive to produce a clear generalisation as to Paine.

"Paine, indeed, deserved moral reprobation for his brutality; and his book has in it an unpleasant flavor. Yet there was a fact which the respectable public tried hard to ignore. Paine's appeal was *not simply* to licentious hatred of religion, but to genuine moral instincts. His 'blasphemy' was not against the Supreme God, but against Jehovah. . . . . Paine, in short, with all his brutalities, had the conscience of his hearers on his side, and we must prefer his rough exposure of popular errors to the unconscious blasphemy of his supporters" (i, 463). [*Sic. Query* "their supporters" or "his opponents".]

It will be necessary in conclusion to examine this reiterated charge of "brutality" against Paine; and the inquiry will bring us to a final decision on Mr. Stephen's fitness for the work of comparative criticism.

No quotations being given by Mr. Stephen in support of his reiterated charge of brutality, we can but assume that he has in view some of those passages in the *Age of Reason* in which Paine attacks some Biblical absurdities with a rough derision that some might call coarse. Were the latter epithet used against him in these cases, I for one should not be much concerned to object, since I have no wish to pretend that Paine's polemic is always of the most refined kind. It could not well be, since he wrote for the people—or, as Mr. Stephen prefers to say, for the mob. It would seem to follow from the latter view that in Mr. Stephen's opinion the mob should have no literature whatever, since he will hardly say that it would have been profitable in Paine's time to write for them in a refined style. Cobbett, who could and did write for them, is admitted to have been tolerably brutal. It would probably stand for little if I were simply to counter Mr. Stephen on this head, and say that Paine was not a brutal writer, especially for his time. Such dicta in matters of taste are unconvincing, and in mere authority Mr. Stephen's dictum of course outweighs mine. I will there-

fore simply cite one other expression of opinion on the point before resorting to comparative critical tests. Mr. Conway writes as follows:

"I know of no similar investigation in which the writer's mind is so generally fixed upon the simple question of truth and falsehood, and so rarely addicted to ridicule. Few will deny the difficulty, however reverent the reciter, of relating the story of Jonah and the whale without causing a smile. Paine's smile is in two sentences; in one place he says it would have been nearer to the idea of a miracle if Jonah had swallowed the whale, elsewhere that if credulity could swallow Jonah and the whale it could swallow anything. But after this, for him, unusual approach to the ribaldry of which he is so freely accused, Paine gives over three pages of criticism on the Book of Jonah, not only grave and careful, but presenting perhaps the earliest appreciation of the moral elevation and large aim of the much-neglected legend" (Article on "Thomas Paine", in *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1879, p. 413).

This also, of course, is not conclusive; but neither I trust is Mr. Stephen's simple epithet; and the next step is to weigh his characterisation of Paine's tone and method against his treatment of other writers. Let us take one of his own sentences:

"Johnson turns the roughest side of his contempt to anyone suspected of scepticism, and calls Adam Smith a 'son of a bitch'" (ii. 369.)

I am loth to attempt a precise definition of the term "brutal", since I fear it might be difficult to frame one which should not cover some of Mr. Stephen's own language against Paine; but I think it will be generally agreed that the word would apply to this utterance of Johnson[1]. If it is possible for a man of letters to speak brutally, Johnson did it when he thus spoke of Smith. Now, it is a simple matter of fact that there is nothing nearly so coarse in the whole of Paine; yet Mr. Stephen must needs speak austerely of the latter's "brutalities",

[1] I say nothing as to the validity of the story. In his "Johnson" (p. 115) Mr. Stephen tells the other story that Smith applied the same expression to Johnson, to his face. I do not believe the latter version; but Mr. Stephen thinks "it is too good to allow us to suppose that it was without some (*sic*) foundation". Another sample of Mr. Stephen's critical method. Need I point out that the presumption against both versions of the story being true is enormous? Mr. Stephen, however, seems to accept both.

while the ruffianism of Johnson is genteelly described in the same book as the "roughest side of his contempt". Again, in his chapter on Warburton, Mr. Stephen quotes, by way of showing some of that divine's tendencies of style, two passages in which indecent words have to be represented by dashes (i. 352). On any theory of critical justice that I can formulate for myself, the term "brutality" should either be applied to such achievements as these of Johnson and Warburton, or else reserved for something still worse. Mr. Stephen never once uses it in regard to the sentences referred to. There is, however, in all Paine's writing, I repeat, nothing coarse enough to be put beside these passages. What is the inference as to Mr. Stephen's critical equity?

The points just dealt with lie on the face of Mr. Stephen's own narrative, but there is a further proof of his bias in the fact that he has entirely suppressed all mention of the frantic violences of Burke against the promoters of the French Revolution. The catalogue lies to the reader's hand in Buckle (3-vol. ed. i. 471–5). Burke in his later years saw fit to speak of the pure-minded Condorcet as a determined villain; to gloat over the sufferings of the imprisoned Lafayette, terming him a "horrid ruffian"; to shriek against France as a "Cannibal Castle", against the National Assembly as the "prostitute outcasts of mankind", and against the French people as the "scum of the earth"; and to urge that the war waged against them by England should be carried on revengefully, bloodily, and for a long space of time. And all these insane ferocities are never once hinted at in a compendium which professes to compare Burke with the thinkers and publicists of his time; while again and again the unenvenomed crudities and coarsenesses of the unsanguinary Paine, who braved death by opposing the execution of the French king, are stigmatised, forsooth, as "brutalities". Thus can history be written.

We come finally to the question of Paine's general calibre, or comparative intellectual standing among the men of his day. Comparative, one says, for it is difficult to imagine any other criterion by which a man's mind is to be finally measured or classified. And Mr. Stephen, though as we have seen he generally leaves the comparative method carefully alone, does fall back upon it here.

It is after his memorable biographical paragraph that he proceeds to draw a comparison between Paine and Burke. In his first edition it began thus:—"And yet Paine, though even his earlier years"—again wanton aspersion, this time without even a biographical reference—"were but too good a preparation for this miserable close, had in him the seeds of something like genius". The paragraph in the second edition runs:

"Yet Paine, whatever may be the truth" [the discovery of that being modestly left by the historian to the general reader] "as to his private life, or the motives which guided his restless political activity, had in him a dash of genius. Of his chief political writings the tract called 'Common Sense', published in January 1776, had, as was thought at the time, very great influence in promoting the Declaration of Independence; and the 'Rights of Man', published in 1791, in answer to Burke's 'Reflections', had an enormous sale. The attack upon the established creed in politics showed, in fact, the same qualities as his attack upon the established creed in religion. He was confronted, indeed, in his later writings by an opponent of incomparably greater power than the orthodox theologians who shrieked at the blasphemies of the 'Age of Reason'. But though Burke moves in an intellectual sphere altogether superior to that in (*sic*) which Paine was able to rise, and though the richness of Burke's speculative power is as superior to Paine's meagre philosophy as his style is superior in the amplitude of its rhetoric, it is not to be denied that Paine's plain-speaking is more fitted to reach popular passions, and even (! !) that he has certain advantages in point of argument" (ii. 261–2).

Here, despite the syntactical infirmity of the last sentence, there is no difficulty in tracing Mr. Stephen's usual bias. The fact, as stated by almost all other historians, is that "Common Sense" really had a most decisive influence in bringing about the Declaration of Independence: it was not only thought so then; it is known now. In that matter, Paine affected the people of the States just as comprehensively and as powerfully as Burke later affected Englishmen towards the French Revolution: he was not merely appealing to the mob: he stirred a people to fateful action; and he maintained the impulsion by his further writings at critical moments. This, one would say, represented a genius at least for that sort of thing; but Mr. Stephen's measure makes out the faculty involved to be but a "dash" of genius. Wherein then lay the amplitude

of the genius of Burke? There is a danger that in defending Paine against Mr. Stephen's special pleading we may be tempted into doing Burke injustice; but I think we shall not be so beguiled when we say that Burke's eminence and merit lay in the breadth and elevation of his social sentiment in his præ-Revolution period, and in the literary and dialectic skill with which he enforced his sentiment at all times, for good or for evil. Alike in his earlier sociology and in his self-expression then and at all times, he was powerful and original. But to say this is not to credit him with an all-round vigor of intellect, or to place him in the front rank of great men. To sum up a man, on the comparative principle, we have to take note of his limitations.

Now, Mr. Stephen is not slack to attribute limitations to Paine: as usual he can furnish the list without being at pains to collect the proofs. Burke is in an "altogether superior" intellectual sphere, revelling in "richness of speculative power"; while Paine's philosophy is "meagre". But what are the data? In what respect is Burke's speculation "rich" as distinguished from his rhetoric? There is really no "speculative" element in Burke's politics whatever: his great characteristic is the vehement and various eloquence with which he enounces his instinctive attitude towards the social tendencies of his time; now resisting what he felt to be blind pedantry and inhumane conservatism; anon finding a wealth of ingenious and imaginative justification for a pedantry and a conservatism in which he shared—as in resisting the claims of the Dissenters; and yet again exhausting the power of words to hurl hatred at those who outraged his habits of emotional attachment to historic institutions. He might be right or he might be wrong, but at least he was not speculative in his philosophy: he was a man of deep and strong sentiments and glowing sympathies, with an incomparable gift of vivid dialectic; a Gladstone raised to a higher power, because more intense, original, and organic in his convictions, endowed with a genius rather than a talent for expression, and carrying passion in his blood and senses, as well as in his brain. Is it not the express statement of all his admirers, Mr. Stephen included, that he hated the speculative men, who thought out schemes of policy without due regard to "prescription"? I cannot

see how this squares with richness of speculative power. What Mr. Stephen was really thinking of was just the richness of dialectic, of illustration and figure; of all, in short, that makes Burke really answer to that much abused designation—a prose poet.

Try him by his relation to non-political ideas, and the limitations become clear. He thought freely and freshly on law, history, and language, but what was his cosmogony, what his religion? When Mr. Stephen wishes to discredit Buckle, he asserts that the latter evaded the theological problems of his day; insisting that this proves intellectual restriction. Of Buckle the statement is simply not true: of Burke it is true. He contrived to set aside, by his sheer force of prejudice, all the religious questionings of his time, and to rest in the exulting, blatant orthodoxy of the rural Tories of his and our day. And his science? I cannot recal a trace of proof that he gained anything seminal from the scientific movement of his age: on that side he was at bottom non-receptive. What Paine could see in regard to traditional faith by "rough common-sense", Burke could not see with all his endowment; where Paine was natively alive to the great problem of the physical universe, Burke was wrapped in a husk of literature, book-culture, and every-day human association.

Consider in particular, however, the attitude of the two men towards the French Revolution, the issue on which they can best be weighed against each other in respect of breadth and sanity of mind, as distinguished from brilliance of rhetoric. It is presumably in this connexion, indeed, that Mr. Stephen draws his comparison of the two men; since he does not refer to Burke's bigotry, and appears to know nothing of Paine save as a writer on politics, and against the Bible. It is like Mr. Stephen to say that the "Reflections" are pitched on an intellectual plane "altogether superior" to that represented by the "Rights of Man", but the proposition, like so many others of his, will not bear examination. Burke, after a lifetime of *succès d'estime*, suddenly attained a popular success just because he voiced with incomparable eloquence and energy the sentiments of the average Englishman at the Revolution crisis. To say that the work by which he first caught the upper-class and middle-class

mind, and produced a general and enduring reaction, is addressed to intellects of a comparatively high order—this is only a sample of that unreasoning panegyric of Burke which has so long discredited English criticism. To any one who will apply fair tests it is plain that the elevation lies in the style and not in the thought, which is again merely typical Tory sentiment dignified by an uncommon range of association and argument. So to dignify it was assuredly a great feat, which let us duly admire; but let us not pretend that the great rhetorician is a great thinker.

Even Mr. Stephen has a feeling that such a performance as the *Reflections*—of which the sounder elements are not profoundly original, while the unsound are shallow with the shallowness of George the Third—will not survive impartial comparative criticism, much less such arbitrary treatment as he accords to Paine; and he indicates his apprehension in the fashion with which we are now so familiar:

"Paine fully believed, or appeared to believe, in the speedy advent of the millennium. His vanity, it is true, was interested in the assumption. The American Revolution, he thought, had brought about the grand explosion, and the foundation of the American Constitution had given the first example of a government founded on purely reasonable principles. Now the pamphlet 'Common Sense' had led to the Revolution, and therefore Paine had fired the match which blew into ruin the whole existing structure of irrational despotism. Still the belief was *probably not the less genuine, though* thus associated with an excessive estimate of personal merits, and Paine is at times eloquent in expressing the anticipations of universal peace and fraternity destined to such speedy disappointment. His retort upon Burke's sentimentalism about chivalry and Marie Antoinette is *not without* dignity . . . . A *degraded representative* of the popular sympathies, Paine yet feels for the people, instead of treating their outcry as too (*sic*) much puling jargon. And therefore he gives utterance to sentiments *not to be entirely quenched by Burke's philosophy*" (ii. 263–4).

Like nearly every passage of Mr. Stephen's that we have had under notice, the foregoing would suffice by itself to convict him of a singular incapacity for equity. Assuming that he had made good his point as to Paine's vanity, which again is worded with hostile animus, what becomes of the insinuation of insincerity? Either Paine believed,

as he was well entitled to do, that his "Common Sense" had been a main influence in precipitating the Revolution, or he did not. If not, there was no vanity; yet even in that case he might surely be perfectly sincere in the hope at which Mr. Stephen sneers. We know he lost it later; but we (*nous autres*, that is, excluding Mr. Stephen) know him to have been full of it before the collapse in France. But if, as Mr. Stephen is satisfied, Paine vaingloriously believed he had brought about a beneficent revolution in America, where is there any pretext for hinting at insincerity in his words as to the movement of things in Europe? "The belief," our acute historian finally decides, was "probably not the less genuine *though* thus associated" with personal vanity; this just after pointing out that the vanity was "interested in" that very belief. As who should say, Cromwell was probably "not the less" sincere in believing God was with him after he had won Dunbar. One would be inclined to say that explicit absurdity was Mr. Stephen's strong point, were there not so many reminders that he can be worse than absurd. The deduction as to Paine's probable sincerity, despite vanity, in a belief which flourished on vanity, is worthy to be treasured beside that other that au argument "loses little from not being smothered"; but we are not allowed to forget dissatisfaction in amusement. The question in hand is the validity of Paine's answer to Burke, from the point of view of right reason. Mr. Stephen will not say that Burke's defence of "prescription" will stand, or that his attitude towards the Revolution was that of one who rightly appreciated the case. He does not like to defend the treatment of the hoarse cry of a wretched people as "too much puling jargon". He feels that Paine has "even some advantages in point of argument", is not always "without dignity", and utters sentiments "not to be entirely (!) quenched by Burke's philosophy". Partially quenched they may perhaps be (that is for the reader to ascertain) but not entirely. Is Burke's "philosophy" then, after all, left in possession of the field? On the contrary, the conclusion of Mr. Stephen's chapter, after all this unspeakable see-sawing, is that Burke's political philosophy is a mere wreck on the shore of time! But before this was conceded, the man who had the right end of the stick must needs be described as "degraded", as appealing to

popular passions, as a meagre intelligence, as excessively vain; and his failure to reach finality of political science must be alleged with contempt before the other's failure could be admitted with reluctance and respect.

A final comparison of Mr. Stephen's dismissals of Paine and Burke respectively will serve to close an examination of which, in that connexion, the reader is perhaps already weary. It is after he has given a "pejorative" account of the drift of the "Rights of Man" that the critic thus pronounces judgment:

"The doctrines thus vigorously laid down [by Paine in politics] have become tolerably threadbare, and every scribbler can expose their fallacy" (ii. 263).

The said doctrines included, even on Mr. Stephen's showing, the proposition that the hereditary principle in Government is an absurdity; that morality consists mainly in doing as we would be done by, and not, as Burke insisted, in reverently regarding all constituted authorities in their order; that the British Constitution was predisposed to corruption; and that the representative system "meets the reason of man"—theses which some of us are fain to maintain still, against even Mr. Stephen and "every scribbler". Nay, Mr. Stephen himself concedes, with his inalienable grace of modification, that Paine spoke "pretty forcibly" when he said that "a body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody ought to be trusted by nobody". But one hastens from such details to a contemplation of the historian's final judgment on Burke, which presents a consummation of dead-lock in antithetic allegation not easily to be paralleled in critical literature.

"Burke's magnificent imagination and true philosophical insight led him more nearly than any of his contemporaries, and even than any of his successors in English political life, to a genuine historical theory. Unluckily his *hatred of unsound metaphysical doctrine* induced him to adopt a view which seems often to amount to a denial of the possibility of basing any general principles upon experience. *Like the cruder empiricists*, he admires the 'rule of thumb' as the ultimate rule, and conservates mere prejudice under the name of prescription. Godwin's title, 'Political Justice', indicates the weak side of his great opponent. Burke had not solved the problem of reconciling expediency with morality, though he indicated the road to a solution" (ii. 280).

That is to say, his true philosophical insight led Burke nearer the truth than any man of his time, or any English politician since; and at the same time his hatred of bad philosophy made him such a bad philosopher that he landed in the philosophy of the "cruder empiricists", *videlicet*, the rule of thumb. And yet, after all, though he attained no solution of his problem, he "indicated the road to a solution". And the solution—which no English politician has yet hit on—? In the very act of coming to a fair conclusion on Burke Mr. Stephen must needs drown decision in contradiction and leave the reader facing blank frustration. It were superfluous to deduce at length the net value of the correlative judgment on Paine; and in any case the task has become too monotonous to be supportable. One grows weary of this suicidal process of vacillating commentary and incoherent prejudice parading as analytical criticism. Turning from counsel darkened to the stage of darkness visible, let the reader attempt fairly to measure Paine by his relation to his age on the main grounds of universal mental activity. There are some further materials for such a judgment, of the existence of which Mr. Stephen does not appear to be aware.

We have seen that, even by the admission of a critic with small gift for fairness, Paine did two very remarkable things in his day. Without political or social influence, he roused the American people to revolution by one stirring manifesto; without learning, he began a new epoch of rationalism by a new and straightforward criticism of the reigning religion. These, be it observed, were not the transient successes of a demagogue; they were performances which gave trend to history, and notably affected the courses of thought and civilisation. Wilkes made more local uproar, but Wilkes did not appreciably influence universal politics, and Wilkes's scepticism bore no fruit in influence on his nation's mind. The constant note of Paine's writing is a commanding and compulsive sincerity, which won for his writings a hearing and a following without precedent in English affairs. In his gift of getting at the heart of any matter he took up he is excelled by no writer of his age; if he could not, like Burke, "wind into a subject like a serpent", he struck into it as with the hammer of Thor. By sheer murderous directness of stroke, his pamphlet on English

finance at one blow vanquished and convinced Cobbett, who had hated Paine by repute with all his robust gift of hatred, and assailed him with the ferocity in which he excelled his whole generation; and the bitter enemy was thenceforth the extravagant worshipper and champion of the dead man he had vituperated living. Genius is a word very loosely used, and it is not necessary to commit Paine's case to any definition of it; but if not the note of genius, then certainly the note of power, is felt in Paine's swift exertions of living force; as when, after precipitating the American Revolution and inspiring it till its consummation, he felt convinced that if he could only get quietly to England and issue a pamphlet he could sway the nation to a new purpose, and did so sway it with a rapidity which startled into new fear the holders of power. And to the end his faculty of conquering conviction never left him. In the leaflet he wrote on "Gunboats" shortly before his death, every phrase is a blow.

But this faculty and this achievement, eminent as they are, do not nearly exhaust Paine's intellectual inventory. Let me again quote from the competent and appreciative essay of Mr. Conway, who I believe has been the first to do full justice to the range of ability exhibited in the "Age of Reason":—

"What homage should we have heard if, in any orthodox work of the last century, had occurred the far-seeing astronomic speculations of the *Age of Reason*? It was from the humble man who in early life studied his globes, purchased at cost of many a dinner, and attended the lectures of Martin, Ferguson, and Bevis, that there came twenty-one years before Herschel's famous paper on the Nebulæ, the sentence: 'The probability, therefore, is that each of those fixed stars is also a sun, round which another system of worlds or planets, though too remote for us to discover, performs its revolutions'." (Article on "Thomas Paine", *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1879, p. 413.)

But that is not the only exhibition on Paine's part of an energy and endowment of mind which carried forward human achievement in other directions than politics. In the appendix to Sherwin's Life, and in some other quarters, will be found an account of Paine's invention of an arched iron bridge, which compelled the approval of the scientific men of his day, and which has been the pioneer of the long line of great modern works of bridge-making in metal. The

credit for the first use of iron in bridge-building, like so many other first steps in human progress, appears to be due to the unprogressive Chinese; but Paine seems to have had no predecessor's hint or help in his introduction of the idea among his race. I cannot ascertain the date at which, in his first sojourn in the States, he constructed his model of an arched iron bridge to cross the Schuylkill at Philadelphia, and it may be that he was preceded in point of time by the English projector of the iron bridge built over the Severn at Coalbrookdale in 1779; but I believe I am right in saying that this small structure was essentially different from Paine's in its principles. Certainly there is no trace of his having got his idea from it, and the French Academy of Sciences dealt with his as a new invention, furnishing "a new example of the application of a metal of which sufficient use has not hitherto been made on a grand scale". It is in 1789 that we find him superintending the construction of his bridge at Rotheram in England, and his accounts of the work give striking proof of his practical capacity in the walk of engineering, for which he had had no formal training. He had been moved to the task by the difficulty of bridging the Schuylkill, where the periodical passage of vast masses of ice made piers impossible, and the 400 feet span precluded the erection of a stone arch. And coming to the problem of the bridge with the same native vigor of insight which he brought to bear on politics and religion, he "took the idea of constructing it from a spider's web, of which it resembles a section". I am not competent to speak of the degree of engineering originality implied in this inspiration; but it is, I believe, the fact that he made a very great advance in his perception of the tubular principle, which dates from the same time. "Another idea I have taken from nature", he writes, "is that of increasing the strength of matter by causing it to act over a larger space than it would occupy in a solid state, as is evidenced in the bones of animals, quills of birds, reeds, canes, etc., which, were they solid with the same quantity of matter, would have the same weight with a much less degree of strength".

Had Mr. Stephen bethought him to ascertain these matters, which alone would seem to some of us enough to prove Paine a man of uncommon ability, he might perhaps have allowed that they pointed to yet another "dash"

of genius. But it never occurs to Mr. Stephen, in writing the history of the English "Thought" of last century, to take any trouble about estimating the nature, amount, and value of the thinking done in connexion with physical science. His critical method is not concerned with these sides of mind. Let me, in exposition of a critical question of some general importance, beg the reader's jaded attention to the passage in which Mr. Stephen passes general judgment on the intellect of Priestley:

"Priestley . . . . possessed one of those restless intellects which are incapable of confining themselves to any single task, and, unfortunately, incapable in consequence of sounding the depths of any philosophical system. . . . . He gave to the world a numerous series of dissertations which, with the exception of his scientific writings, bear the marks of hasty and superficial thought. As a man of science he has left his mark upon the intellectual history of the century; but, besides being a man of science, he aimed at being a metaphysician, a theologian, a politician, a classical scholar, and a historian. . . . . So discursive a thinker could hardly do much thorough work, nor really work out or co-ordinate his own opinions. Pushing rationalism to conclusions which shocked the orthodox, he yet retained the most puerile superstitions. He disbelieved in the inspiration of the Apostles, and found fault with St. Paul's reasoning, but had full faith in the prophecies, and at a late period of his life expected the coming of Christ within twenty years. . . . . He flashes out at times some quick and instructive estimate of one side of a disputed argument, only to relapse at the next moment into crude dogmas and obsolete superstitions" (i. 430–1).

Did it ever before occur to a historian to sum up a man's performance by enlarging condemnatorily on what are alleged to be his failures, and dismissing in an incidental clause the great successes which have kept his name alive? To see what such a method would lead to if consistently applied, let us just take one of Mr. Stephen's own sentences, concerning Newton:

"Newton himself was unconscious of the bearing of his discoveries upon the traditional theology, and bent his mighty intellect to that process of solving riddles which he called interpreting the prophecies" (i. 82).

This is, by comparison, a sufficiently lenient way of speaking of Newton; seeing that the belief in "prophecy" is,

in the eye of pure reason, to the full as puerile a superstition as any of Priestley's, being indeed the very form of superstition which Mr. Stephen specially so characterised in Priestley's case. But anyhow Mr. Stephen admits that Newton was a consummate failure as a rationalist theologian, apart from his Arianism. Yet what in Priestley's case is made the justification of a substantially belittling verdict is in Newton's only made an occasion for a respectful remark on the weaknesses of greatness; and Newton is reverently adjudged "mighty" on the strength of his notorious scientific success, while Priestley's notorious scientific success is barely reckoned as a mentionable offset to his theological weaknesses and inconsistencies. The thing would be ludicrous if it were not so displeasing a violation of the simplest instincts of critical justice. Mr. Stephen undertakes his history of a century's "Thought" without a glimpse of a scientific interpretation of his term; and he passes judgments on men by the score without an attempt to arrive at a reasoned or uniform standard of measurement. He has neither test nor method.

Such criticism is but a formal restatement of the drift of general prejudice, deflected by prejudice that is personal. And to come back finally to the matter in hand, it is just the drift of general prejudice that has settled Paine's place in ordinary history. His singular powers have been in part ignored, in part treated as mere genius for evil, for the simple reason that he was identified with two causes which passed before his death into common odium, the French Revolution and Freethought. In the immense reaction against the evil outcome of the Revolution, all pretence of fair criticism of the men who had incited it disappeared; and in the English imagination Paine was slumped with Robespierre and Marat, who sought to slay him because he boldly resisted them. Burke's to-day is seen to be the really lost cause; but eighty years ago he seemed a kind of archangel assaulting the dragon; and the gradual change of sentiment has left his legend almost intact; while Paine, who became identified with the dragon forthwith, is whelmed in limitless slander. His Freethought was taken as a dispensation for every form of calumny that Christian malignity could devise; and in his adopted country the result was a new revelation of the possibilities of human baseness. No tale of national in-

gratitude in the annals of antiquity, where they are so plentiful, will eclipse the record of the repudiation of Paine by the Republic he had helped to make, when he recorded his hostility to its superstitions. Others, known to be as unbelieving as he, dissembled, and retained their place on the roll of fame: his name became the chosen target of the great tribe of dastards. "A bust of [Paine], by Jarvis, in the possession of the New York Historical Society, is kept under lock and key because it was defaced and defiled by visitors" (Article in *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1859, p. 15). And men who are far above the moral plane of the Christian blackguard can still be found to carry on the defilement with pen on paper. Where the known vices of great men are habitually palliated, one falsely imputed vice is made out to be Paine's main characteristic. Addison suffers no diminution of esteem for his confessed intemperance; Lamb is loved no less for his pathetic weakness; the licence of Burns leaves him worshipful to his countrymen; but the disproved charge against Paine is forever iniquitously fastened on his memory, and his unquestioned innocence of life in other regards only stimulated to new fury of obloquy the bigots whose creed he had impeached. The thrice disproved lie as to his death-bed terror and remorse is still part of the stock-in-trade of "Christian Evidence"; and I have just had sent me a copy of a tract entitled "The Inspiration of the Bible", by H. L. Hastings, published by the reputable firm of Bagster and Sons, circulated by the late Lord Shaftesbury, and marked "Fifth Hundred Thousand", in which the lie is retailed with the "circumstance" that it was vouched for in 1876 by a woman of eighty-eight, who at the age of *eleven* was "invited by a distant connexion . . . . to go and see T. Paine on his death-bed". And this precious story the pietist offers by way of answering, as he says, the statements of "infidels who were *not present*", and who speak of "events which occurred years before they were born". The inspiration of the Bible apparently cannot be defended without false witness against unbelievers, and the story is deliberately told in such a way as to prevent the pious reader from suspecting that the death-bed figment was exposed, after personal investigation, by Cobbett, who was Paine's contemporary. And all the while piety is complacent over the assertion that

a child of eleven was taken by a Christian relative to hear, for edification, the delirious blasphemies and shrieks for mercy of an infidel dying in extreme bodily agony.

In the face of these crass mendacities of average Christian controversy, it is but just to mention that Mr. Stephen from the first rejected the death-bed story as a fiction. I am sorry there is so little more to say in praise of his treatment of the subject.

ROYALISM:

A NOTE ON THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE.

BY

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LONDON:
FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
63, FLEET STREET, E.C.

1886.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY ANNIE BESANT AND CHARLES BRADLAUGH,
63, FLEET STREET, E.C.

ROYALISM.

In the early part of 1886, shortly after the fall of the Salisbury ministry—the first of that year—it began to be noticed that the Queen of England was unusually active in the discharge of such of her functions as brought her before the public eye; that is, in the laying of foundation-stones, opening hospitals, witnessing military reviews, and so on. It had already been remarked that Her Majesty had done a most unusual thing—for her—in presiding at the opening of Parliament; but that had been generally set down to her known wish to strengthen the Conservative Government by every means in her power. The subsequent activity, however, had obviously some other purpose; and, looked at in connexion with the coming jubilee and with certain admonitions addressed to Her Majesty by London journalists, the new departure was intelligible enough. The journalists in question had told their Queen that they regarded her with inexpressible respect, but that they were not at all satisfied with the manner in which she had lately performed her duties. She had not laid foundation-stones enough, had not been seen enough, had not been sufficiently talked about; hence hisses on the day of the opening of Parliament, and a certain general coldness towards the institution of the throne. Her Majesty, it now became apparent from her conduct, graciously accepted the rebuke; and her now frequent public appearances represented her determination to consolidate the monarchy. The crown, like other old-established houses, had acknowledged the virtue of advertising, so long the specialty of younger concerns.

To the people who had prescribed the policy, its adoption naturally gave entire satisfaction. It has come to this with the institution of monarchy in England, that those who profess to believe in it are yet not ashamed to represent the sovereignty as having its *raison d'être* in the expediency of providing a certain kind of vulgar attraction in connexion with public celebrations. If it were seriously believed that royalty possessed any political value or importance, its active adherents could hardly thus liken it to a brass band or the procession of a travelling circus. At all times, doubtless, shrewd monarchs have seen in show-making a means of fortifying their dynasty and filling their coffers with a saving of friction; but in the England of to-day, where dynastic rivalry is an impossible conception, and where the royal stipend and State expenditure are alike controlled by the legislature, the counsel to royalty to make itself a gazing-stock would appear to imply either that there is nothing else of importance for royalty to do, or that the institution, however otherwise advantageous, depends for its continuance on the industrious fulfilment of that particular function. It will perhaps be worth while, in the season of jubilee, to look into the merits alike of such an institution and of its upholders.

Sir Henry Maine, little as he desires to aid, either directly or indirectly, the spread of democratic notions, has probably done as much as most men to undermine the symmetrical theory with which Sir Robert Filmer established in their faith the monarchists of two hundred years ago. Whether or not Sir Robert's circle believed in a patriarchal succession, meandering from Adam by way of Abraham down to Charles II., it is not now fashionable to point to such an explanation of the monarchies of modern Europe. The envy of surrounding nations has now for a hundred years been the recognised after-dinner vindication of the English throne, as of the rest of the constitution; and if it is felt to be losing its edge from tear and wear, there is still not the least hurry about getting a solider pretext. In short, of rational justification of the monarchy among us there is none. The average Englishman no more seeks to defend it than he—or an Ashantee—would "defend" the existence of his deity. It is there, and that is enough for him. Like the Ashantee

with his fetish, he may grumble against his sovereign, but the idea of doing without one, or of analysing the fact of the sovereignty, never of his own will crosses his mind. And, what is more to the point, the suggestion of such an idea from outside moves the passive royalist to something like fright, while those of the active type—the anonymous journalist and the tribe who aspire to "shape the whisper of the throne"—reserve for such a suggestion the most solemn invective in their venerable vocabulary. It is the Conservative's last impeachment of the Liberal—an impeachment which he reserves for special crises, as Napoleon did the Old Guard—that the tendencies of Liberalism point to the abolition of royalty; that if the House of Lords goes there will be no security for the throne. What *is* the thing thus spoken of as Romans might speak of the republic—this national palladium and fountain of honor?

I have not the slightest wish to make the present an occasion for a personal attack on any member of the royal family. Neither her Majesty nor any of her house can conceivably be less deserving of ordinary respect than the individualities which prosternate before them in court and in press; and to abuse the royalty instead of the royalism would in the circumstances be to fall into crass fallacy, not to say downright injustice. For people educated enough and magnanimous enough to govern themselves, either politically or privately, at this time of day, it cannot matter a whit, politically speaking, what is the character or the capacity of the sovereign or the heir to the throne. A well-conducted or estimable king is no fitter to hold the regal position than an immoral or foolish one. In Britain, above all existing or bygone monarchies, that is an irrelevant issue from the point of view of practical politics. But inasmuch as we are here looking into the nature of royalism as a cult or opinion, it is necessary to set forth what the royalist worships, if we would fully realise his place in the scale of humanity.

Now, it is a matter too notorious to be gainsaid, except by anonymous journalists and after-dinner speakers, that the British royal family, with perhaps one or two partial exceptions, does not include one lady or gentleman of more than average intellectual gifts, and that it does include several who fall below the average. The latter fact is not

the fault of those concerned; I do not even say that it is their misfortune: it is simply a datum. Nor can it greatly matter whether the most prominent members of the family belong to the last indicated order of minds. It would, however, be an affectation not to note here that the lady whose jubilee is at hand must be so classed; and we can hardly look at the matter without having our sensations qualified by that fact. Her Majesty has written certain books, the briefest perusal of which makes it clear that they would never have been published—or even written—if she were not the Queen of England. No other English lady would have been allowed by her domestic circle, if it had any control over her actions, to put such matter together as constitutes these volumes. That being so, the occasion becomes one for compassion rather than for blame. A woman whose lot is laid in a position in which she is loudly flattered on the score of her worst imbecilities, and lured to virtual moral humiliation by the united voices of the morally and mentally worthless of all classes in her nation, is not happily placed, from the point of view of those who keep any dignified ideal of human life before themselves. No one of us can have the least right to assume that he or she would not be morally unbalanced by such conditions; and if Queen Victoria happens to have made a rather egregious exhibition of defective powers as beside crowned heads generally, the fact only comes under the previous datum as to intellectual averages. She being the personality she is, her appearance in the sphere of the intellectual life follows of necessity. Candid people admit that a monarch who should write a really good book would give proof of natural gifts and judgment higher than those which might produce such a work in ordinary society; and it follows that even the issue of an extravagantly weak book by a queen should not be made a special ground for impugning her mental calibre.

But what is to be said of those who, whether by personal adulation and encouragement or by printed praise, fooled to the top of her bent the royal lady they professed to revere? To jest over the newspaper part of the process would be like satirising a farce; so gross was the laudation, so brazen the pretence; and the spectacle of the typical journalist writing with his tongue in his cheek has in it too much suggestion of moral disease to call forth simple

indignation. This sort of corruption, like certain forms of vice, makes one grow hopeless rather than angry. It is bad enough that there should be well-intentioned people by the hundred thousand to whom the Queen's compositions are matter of reverential interest; bad enough that, apart from the chorus of fashion, the average middle-class family should make the purchase of these volumes the largest part of its scanty expenditure on books for the year, and should exhibit them on the drawing-room table with unaffected pride. These things point to an amount of *banal* sentiment, intellectual destitution, and sheer uncivilisedness, which, existing in such a society as ours, promises badly enough for the early future of culture. But the hypocrisy, the puffery, the cant—are these not still worse and stronger forces of frustration to the assumed upward tendency of things? The gods, according to Schiller and Carlyle, fight in vain against stupidity; how then against stupidity with a guiding and inspiring Asmodeus that can out-Grundy Mrs. Grundy and out-roar Caliban?

To be sure, the "guide of public opinion" is not always entirely insincere. Even the man who writes up any cause for hire cannot escape having a bias or sentiment of some sort; and his sentiment of course tends to be worthy of his trade—something cheap and coarsely convenient; so that there are many prestidigitators who believe in and applaud monarchy *per se* as honestly as it is possible for them to do anything. And then there is always a strong force of instructors of the public who are providentially fitted to it, as the parodist's fat driver to his fat oxen. This type of oracle it is who anticipates and eclipses the flattest platitudes of the fattest heads in the commonwealth at any given juncture; and the changes he can ring on the themes of loyalty and royalty give the crowning proof of his powers. He is the genius of fustian. To the bankrupt claptrap of the primæval toast-speech he gives a new gloss and an undreamt-of unctuousness; till the simple citizen, seeing his vague ineptitudes of floating sentiment thus fulmined across the realm with front and throat of brass, learns to respect his most abject instincts, and to see in the clanging vacuity of his echo-fetish the witness of his own sagacity. The self-styled leader actually does lead his public—to the very Utopia of fatuous make-believe, to the uttermost limbo of buncombe.

History warns us, memorably enough, not to suppose that the devoutest worshipper of the squalidest idol in its motley pantheon must needs be either base or small. At the junction of Pall Mall and Cockspur Street, London, there stands an equestrian statue of a microcephalous man, which is probably not to be equalled in the carved-work of the civilised world for meanness. The head, seen up there, seems the very model of the ignoble, so trivial is it, so beggarly, so graceless. It is the effigy of George the Third, to whom, in his day, many a good and true English gentleman did homage, as did Walter Scott to his successor, with an unfaltering enthusiasm that would have cherished as a priceless thing the cup from which that paltry mouth had drunk. Such worthlessness of breed as is proclaimed by this statue, shamelessly salient in the heart of the empire city, stirs an observer to that kind of uncalculating aversion which, in the case of meritless human deformity, is analogous to the instinct that moves the rearer of animals to destroy the hopelessly puny. It is unjust to contemn the unworthy organism as such; but just that monstrous elevation of it makes it almost odious. Yet there can be no question that, just as Walter Scott was entirely sincere in his strangest homage to his king, many a manly and generous soul in those generations took delight as he did in honouring as regal the man who held the regal place, never dreaming of his unworthiness. So Bishop Ken could kneel by the bedside of Charles the Second as reverently as could any disciple by his dying master. Such things in his own day might have made intelligible to Milton the worship of stocks and stones.

Not mean and not small, surely, was Sir Walter Scott; but you do not worship stocks and stones for nothing. "Whoever meanly worships a mean thing," was Thackeray's account of a snob. But even when the worship is not mean, but merely childlike, it cannot well fail to bring about some resemblance in the worshipper to the thing worshipped. The most notable aspect of Scott for us to-day is, to put it briefly, that with the imagination and the impulses of a man of genius he had the political and social ideals of a schoolboy; and it is mainly because so many honest men among us are schoolboys in his fashion, and because so many others can only rise above the schoolboy ideal to attain that of the pedant, that the throne of Queen

Victoria can be said to be "broad based upon her people's will". Now, the schoolboys and the pedants must needs, so far as their collective will is concerned, have a polity in keeping with their notions: no people can long have any other. The question is whether these citizens are in the line of progress; whether their walk and conversation promises anything for an advance of the community in health and strength; and there is only one answer. In its best type, that of Scott, the loyalist class is seen to be void of upward political impulse; fit only, whatever be its own virtue in the way of sincerity, to bring to pass a Chinese millennium of mindless convention, a stucco Paradise of all starched and gilded things, with who knows what vile underworld of rottenness and bruteward-verging woe. One sometimes feels as if the foolishest Republican were in one way a more hopeful spectacle than the soberest convinced monarchist, in that the first has at least the sense for and the yearning towards an ideal of human things in which man shall not of necessity be despicable, while the other has willingly embraced the ideal of the slave, giving his vote for a perpetual session of indignity; fixed in the faith that mankind has none but low destinies, because himself well pleased with such. Surely the last are the true vulgar.

I should expect competent minds to admit this. I should expect the really cultured people to agree that the level of life and mind indicated by the crush to a royal *levée*, the thronging to a theatre where royalty will appear, the doing of things because the Prince of Wales does them, and going to places because he goes there, and the wheezy bombast in connexion with his and the Queen's public appearances—that all this is rather further away from human dignity and upward social evolution than even the rant of the pot-house. The life of the upper mob is not merely sterile, socially speaking; it is already realised decay—the decay that history whispers-of in the places of Babylon and Nineveh, and reveals in the grimy vestiges of Rome. On the other hand, the outcry of discontent, however cheap and frothy, is, in the terms of the case, a struggle for better things, hinting of all the race's immemorial aspiration and life-giving unrest.

There are among us, however, able men with a very keen eye for the alloy in all aspiration, who take much

pains to insist on its presence, and to save us from being taken in by it. So far as it goes, theirs is a perfectly proper work, there being no more good, and indeed worse harm, in democratic pinchbeck than in any other. Inasmuch, however, as these critics of democracy are in many cases seen to desire not so much its purification as its discredit, it becomes at least interesting to know what state of things, what political practice, it is that does or would satisfy them. One can understand distrust and disesteem of republican morals and mouthing as they are to be seen in contemporary republics: what one has a difficulty in understanding is a quite contented civility towards our own domestic drama. On the one hand, the written and other performances of her Majesty; the comedy of her political functions; the chronic marrying of her descendants to princely but accommodating Germans, and the accompanying dignified appeal to the British taxpayer, with the always resulting popular protest that the Queen is well known to have immense accumulations of her own: on the other hand the devotion, unalterable by any scandal, with which the upper classes fix their eyes on the Prince of Wales as a divine ensample in all things; and the edifying national custom of producing one or other member of the family, if possible, at the inauguration of every new public building; the royal performer on such occasions being felt to combine, as it were, the functions of the ark of God in Israel and of the Tichborne claimant or a champion sculler at a London music-hall. Just as the critics of democracy overlook a myriad items of iniquity in their praise of the strong governments of the past, so do they stedfastly ignore the whole question of the influence of the royalist cult on the mental and moral tone of nations, treating the problem of government as if it were solely one of the maintenance of a permanent executive.

Much has been heard among us, and rightly, of the political corruption of the United States. That cannot be too well remembered by democrats, for whom it is more important to keep the fact in view than to point out that their critics have a convenient way of forgetting alike the corruption that filled monarchic England only a few generations ago and the unique conditions lately existing in the States. But there is one more question worth keeping before the public mind, and that is whether the presence

of any of the special vices of the United States polity has had a more degrading effect on the American people than the fashion of royalism has had on the English. One of Sir Henry Maine's weighty objections to the democratic formulas of the past is that they have "enervated the human intellect". That is a serious matter, and in so far as the statement is true it is entirely cogent—so cogent that I could wish Sir Henry Maine would bring his tests to bear on other branches of thought than politics. But—to stick to politics—if enervation of the human intellect is a crass vice in a political theory, what is to be said of the influence of British monarchism?

It is a very puzzling business to go back in history a few centuries, say to the time of the Tudors or the præ-Revolution Stuarts, and ask oneself what was the effect of a reverence for Henry VIII. or Elizabeth or James I. on the mind of the average Englishman, and what would have been the effect on his character of some other political system. These inquiries belong to the obscurest departments of that science of "Hypothetics" for which Sir Henry Maine has such a passion that, even while describing it as futile, he repeatedly resorts to it, on the pretext of queries as to whether we should have had the Gregorian calendar or the steam engine under universal suffrage, and so forth. But "Hypothetics" so-called, like other forms of speculation, has points of direct connexion with practical life, as when we ask whether the substitution of a republic for a monarchy in England now would raise or lower the national character; and it is an almost necessary prelude or rider to such a question as this last, to ask whether in recent times the habit of regarding the monarchy with devotion has not been degrading.

"What seems to us baseness," says Sir Henry Maine, speaking of the old flattery of kings, "passed two hundred years ago at Versailles for gentleness and courtliness; and many people have every day before them a monument of what was once thought suitable language to use to a King of England, in the Dedication of the English Bible to James I." It is a curious thing that a writer of Sir Henry's sagacity, with such a thought in his mind, should be only concerned to append to it a reflexion on the existing fashion of flattering the populace. Does he suppose that the last is a new development? and, above

all, does he think the conventional attitude towards sovereigns to-day is greatly changed from what it was at the times he mentions? He is perfectly right in calling notice to the one evil; but it gives his teaching a certain air of partisanship that he should so completely avoid the other considerations of the case. Flattery of the people must more or less lower both the people—if they swallow it—and the flatterers; and sincere but unwise eulogy may do similar harm. But if there be any value in the principles on which all such judgments proceed, this period of jubilee in particular, and the worship of royalty in general, is corrupting, lowering, and enervating. Most of us have some sympathetic shame at the spectacle of a Scott at the feet of a Guelph: Thackeray, if no one else, has stung us into a sense of the abasement implied in the nation's homage to the "first gentleman in Europe". Even the shuffling protest of Trollope, one hopes, has done little to restore that utter deadness of moral sense which permitted not merely the payment of respect to the regal function, but fulsome and debasing adulation of the known man, gross, treacherous, foolish: one hopes, that is, that Englishmen have generally got past the stage of cherishing the memory of George the Fourth; whether or not they feel as hotly about him as Thackeray did. They wince at the thought of the state of things in which a man of letters could be put in jail for cracking a joke at the expense of such a personage, and in which the attention of the country could be fastened on the band of loose fish and demoralised wits who shared his society; while what was best in the nation—brave endeavor, patient science, eager philanthropy, fine faculty, and wise thought—went its obscure way as best it might, and what tolerable performance had any recognition was held as honored in being associated with such a reign. These things suggest that while England was ostensibly covered with glory it was in the main besotted and unworthy, wedded to base ideals, and for the time positively going downwards in its moral and mental pitch, much as it had sunk in some respects during the century and a half before.

There always forces itself the question, however, whether we are much better to-day; granted that our moral level —or at least our taste—is on the whole more creditable than that of our fathers. To keep the issue quite free

from doubtful personal matters, let us take the case of the late Prince Consort, generally allowed to have been an estimable and cultured gentleman. In his case we have no worship of naked unworthiness, but only a quasi-reverential homage to a quite ordinary personality. What was or is the effect? Certainly a lowering of ideals and an enormous cultivation of mediocrity. All the arts have here combined to treat as an immortal a well-meaning gentleman because, being the Queen's husband, he took some intelligent interest in national progress, and in his way sought to promote it. A great poet hymns his memory as he might do that of a great man, and British taste does its villanous worst in his monumental commemoration. It is with the moral side of the process as with the artistic—standards of judgment are vitiated; facts are falsified; the small is made to seem the great and the cheap the precious. What can more "enervate the human intellect" than this vast perversion of all the instincts of admiration through a whole age and a whole people? The very function of the laureate here stamps his art with the stigma of the mercenary and the commonplace. Poetry in his hands here becomes but one more of the world's venalities; one more procuress for the lords of Vanity Fair.

The cult is carried on, one sees, just as easily without any pretext of personal worth as with it. The sovereign's son's son—possibly a good lad enough, though he must find it hard work to stay so—goes to Edinburgh when there is an exhibition to open; and straightway the fountains of civic drivel are broken-up; the incense is burned; the local muse is invoked, and the elders of the people abase themselves—just the same for a raw unknowing boy as for his sire or his sire's sire. And in the land where leal once meant good and bravely true, this serf-like subserviency is known as loyalty; a vulgar vice here as everywhere taking the name of a virtue. Despite all literary pretence, there is no country with a duller public sense of humor than England. The Mayor and Corporation of Eastbourne, like others, thought fit to humbly felicitate the newly adult prince on his coming of age, and the answer went throughout the empire: "Whatever the future may have in store, the kindly care of my parents will never be forgotten by me." The good youth! The inanity is too flat for a smile; but is the heart of

England—that fat-encumbered organ—aught but well pleased?

Turn Elizabethan phraseology into modern, and you have in the dedication of the Bible just the kind of sycophancy that flourishes round the throne to-day. That the old sample happens to be printed on a fly-leaf of the national sacred-book is neither here nor there. What more of abjection is implied in that than in the unspeakable fact of a national thanksgiving to the gods, after pagan precedent, for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from a fever? What interval is there between the eternal singing of "God save the Queen" by assemblies of her subjects—that simple summary of the national religion—and the panegyric of Elizabeth and James by the translating bishops? The fact that any one should miss seeing the perfect correspondence simply proves how the habit of royalism stupefies. A few years ago, when a lunatic fired at the Queen, a priest came forward with a freshly inspired stanza-and-a-half for the national "anthem", as the royalist song is very fitly termed, by way of embodying the feelings supposed to be stirred up by the lunatic's procedure. Remarkable verses they were.

> "Angels around her [Majesty's] way
> Watch, while by night and day,
> Millions with fervor pray
> God save the Queen!"

was part of the reverend bard's contribution to the body of revealed religious truth; and instead of that poetic adjuration so dear to loyalty—

> "*Con*-found their pauly-ticks,
> Frustrate their knavish tricks"

—sentiments which, as the *Rock* thoughtfully observed at the time, "touch so nearly on secular questions,"—the servant of God and the Queen, always àpropos of the lunatic, proposed the more devotional prayer:

> "Break thou rebellious wings,
> Smite when dark treason springs."

Perhaps impressed by the celerity with which the reverend innovator's curse had come home to roost on the wings of his Pegasus, the respectable British public did not take to the revised psalm; but they went about breathing fire and

slaughter against the lunatic in such a way as to suggest how much he and they had in common. It is always the same. Nobody but a madman ever did shoot at the Queen, but every fresh fiasco elicits the same blatant execration, the same shrieks for blood. And the gentlemen of the *Saturday Review*, with that genteel blackguardism which seems to be maintained among them by the laying on of hands, take such an opportunity to compare the crazy culprit with the "average Northampton elector"; while the otherwise inspired *Tablet* announces that the madman's attempt may "fairly be referred" to men of Atheistic opinions. So do bigotry and royalism join hands on the common ground of native brutality.

"Dummheit und Bosheit buhlten hier
Gleich Hunden auf freier Gasse."

There is, perhaps, no clearer proof of the vicious influence of the whole royalist gospel than the fashion in which the Prince of Wales is at once flocked after and vilified by London society. Even in those society journals which are wont to dog him with fœtid flattery and snobbish gossip, he is liable at any moment to insolent attack; but in the world at large his name is found at one season the centre of an offensive scandal, and at another the watchword of fashion. He is told by journalists of the backstairs that he is the "social sovereign" of England; that it was he who taught his countrymen to smoke cigarettes; that to him men owe the modification of the dress-suit by a white waistcoat; that he is a profound judge of character; that when he was absent "the season was a failure, and the entire social system (!) was dislocated. Society, in fact, went to pieces. Nobody knew what to be at or what to do, because the Marlborough House ideal was not visible in their midst." In him at length, in short, the valet had found his hero. But of all the mindless mob thus represented as looking to him for an "ideal" of life, how many are there who have not chuckled or tittered over every story told to his shame?

With these unclean records, in detail, I have here nothing to do, whether by way of founding on them or examining them. The point is that again and again since his early manhood, England has resounded with a scandal in which he figures disgracefully; that the great majority

of his countrymen affect to believe each infamy in turn; and that he yet retains his precious "social" prestige unimpaired. If he is in the main innocent—as may well be—no man is better deserving of sympathy; and if he were guilty, followed as he has been from his youth up by a herd of sycophants mean enough to laud him for any vileness, he would at least be no worse a personality than the people who make him their "ideal", to say nothing of his actual corrupters. But whatever his life may have been, there can be neither mistake nor doubt about the moral spectacle presented by the "society" which makes him its lawgiver. Purposeless as that of the Restoration, and tasteless as that of the first Georges; frivolous as ever was that of France, and undignified as ever was that of a German principality; it is the most unwholesome limb of the English race; a danger to civilisation and a confusion to all high hopes of human things.

II.

To turn from the intimate study of royalism as it flourishes among us to the tracing of its natural history, is to change our outlook without greatly altering our sensations; though the latter inquiry has the saving quality of generalness. Sociologically considered, the royalist cultus has the interest of standing alone among human superstitions, in that it has up till now obeyed none of the laws of decay which affect all the rest. It is a remarkable fact that there is no case in all history of a State getting rid of the monarchic form of government by a peaceful process, as it might get rid of any other institution which its members had deliberately decided to make an end of. All suspensions of monarchy have been by revolution. The American habit of talking of the monarchies of to-day as "effete", and of assuming that thrones are now less secure than in the middle or early ages, is quite fallacious. Kings in those days were unseated by rebellion and revolution just as often as now—nay, much oftener; and the supposed spread of Republican principles is made far too much of when it is pointed to as involving the euthanasia of kingship. Such an euthanasia

—that is, a peaceful ending as opposed to a violent—may be in store, but there are no very good grounds for predicting it. Whatever might be the measure of freedom existing in the old democracies, there was at least plenty of Republican intelligence and enthusiasm at various times in the antique world; but it never led to the orderly removal of one sovereignty by affecting the intelligence of any nation that had a different polity. Men could rebel against a tyranny rather more easily in the past than at present: what reason is there to infer that, either in the case of a despotism or in that of a dummy monarchy, they will in future abolish thrones on the sheer impulse of progressive common sense? For that there would need some movement at once strenuous and dignified, serious without violence and yet really forcible, and where is there such a movement? If there were one in England, these particular pages need not have been written.

In keeping with the blindness of the critics of democracy to the moral bearings of royalism is their complete omission to analyse its intellectual basis. Of late years we have had any number of demonstrations of the "metaphysical" and "abstract" character of many democratic formulas; but what could be more essentially metaphysical than the sentiment of monarchism? The only doubt is whether, according to Comte's categories, it is not rather of the "theological" order—that is, belonging to the fetishistic line of thought instead of the idealising, as commonly understood. The early savage saw deities in things: the later man explained things in terms of deity: the royalist may be held to do either of these things. But in any view his habit of mind is far enough away from the scientific methods professedly followed by the critics in question. The reasoning which dismisses as baseless the plea that men are naturally equal, or possessed of "rights", must have hard work to find a solid place in the mirage of blind emotion that has surrounded kings and dynasties from the dawn of history. The curious thing is—it is another way of putting the uniqueness of the royalist delusion—that men were nearer a positive or rational notion of the matter in barbaric times than in modern. Even after the establishment of the hereditary principle had introduced metaphysical obscurity, a rebellious baron very nearly saw his king for what, biologically speaking, he really was—a feudal superior putting on airs; and

there was generally an appreciable crop of rebellious barons. And even for the non-rebellious there was nothing outlandish in the idea of putting down one king and making another. Here there was a certain hold on facts and forces, on matter and motion. But the history of monarchic civilisation is a record of the passing of such a positive and factual way of thinking into one partaking largely of the nature of hallucination. Certain it is that for many a century kings have been as truly hedged by divinity as ever were any claimants of supernatural powers. The feeling towards them has been on precisely the same psychological plane as that of the devout towards idols and consecrated things. It is mere idle pedantry[1] to explain it as a sense of respect for the holder of the highest office in the State. It is unreasoning, unreflecting, rising in obscure hereditary sensations, in all likelihood deriving from præ-human conditions, but certainly much developed in late times; and it is only by a conscious effort of reasoning that one bred in a monarchic country makes his first step to a saner state of mind.

It is clearly a superstition, or something strictly of that nature, that makes men insist on keeping the crown in the line of family succession. It may be superficially compared to the ordinary principle of inheritance, or to the early custom of keeping handicrafts in particular families; but a glance at history shows that the hereditary principle is adhered to in royalism where it is discarded in other affairs. The property of a traitor or a convicted felon escheated to the crown, his children's rights falling to the ground; and in the case of hereditary offices we do not find that a son was held to be entitled to a post from which his father was summarily dismissed. But the regal right of a deposed king's son has been almost invariably held to subsist despite the deposition—so held even by those

[1] Professor Freeman, whose historic generalisations are invariably either second-hand or worthless, and are frequently both, has laid it down that the spirit of Christianity is fundamentally opposed to the recognition of any pre-eminence in a person or a family as such. If that were the fact, it would be one more proof of the supernatural failure of Christianity to carry its supposed spirit into practice. But the Professor's further statement that kings to-day are appointed for reasons of political expediency, serves as a measure of the value of his opinion. The solemn elevation of one maniac to the throne vacated by another in Bavaria, is only a rather picturesque instance of the rooted practice of modern Christendom.

who deposed the father. Thus in Scotland those who rebelled against James III. did it by way of setting up his son; similarly Mary's subjects professed to be fighting against her on behalf of her infant; and indeed there seems to have been no time of life at which a Scotch monarch's crown was so absolutely undisputed as in his childhood; his person at that stage, instead of being menaced, being fought for by all factions as a sort of talisman. No conjunction of events could break down this instinct of the heredity of royalty. Rebellion against Charles I., for that matter, never meant to anyone in Scotland, and seems to have meant to no one in England up to the last complications, any design against the King's kingship; and there can be little doubt that but for the dominance of the army, England would have followed Scotland in declaring for Charles II. as soon as his father was beheaded. Sir Henry Maine very truly says that the popular enthusiasm was only for the Restoration, never for the Commonwealth. Royalism is a cult, not a conviction.

The Revolution of 1688 proved this once for all. A king was exiled as being intolerable to the greater part of the nation; but, it being no more possible for them to abandon all at once the royalist superstition than for a tribe of savages suddenly to become scientific Agnostics, the next step was to crown a new king whose claim consisted in his being the husband of the daughter of the exile. If the transaction had been carried through by men who were free from the superstition, they would undoubtedly have taken the most politic course open to them in the situation; but the diplomatists were in point of fact as devout in their reverence for the sacred descent as the mass of their countrymen. The faith has never dwindled since. Through a line of sovereigns which has not included one respectable intelligence, and whose lives, in the case of the males, have without exception defied the morality which English cant has always claimed for English society, the average run of English men and women have stood fast in what they call their "loyalty". Such loyalty inspires the sheep which leaps an open space where the bell-wether jumped a gate. The one supportable figure in the list is that of the man who got into it by the chance of his having married the daughter of a king declared unfit to rule. After him comes another daughter, in whose life we have the spectacle of a nation's destinies

hanging on the forlorn decisions of a worried woman who could by no chance have changed places with one of her chambermaids without putting a clearer head under the crown than her own. Then in succession two ignorant boors; then a mischievous cretin, beside whose twilight intelligence the blundering prejudice of his ancestors seems actual sagacity; and here loyalty touches its high-water mark. Descending in the scale of religions, we find the least human-looking idol receiving the intensest adoration: so, in the royalism of England, the king who began with a nutshell of mind and died insane has obtained the most reverential devotion. And in his case history has come within living memory. It was patriotic of Sir Henry Maine to cast in the direction of France for a case of base flattery of a king; and only to hint that in the far-off times of James the Sixth English royalism might tend to hyperbole. But it happens that Louis XIV. and Louis XV. were competent minds in comparison with our Hanoverian kings; that they were tolerable company for fairly clever men; and that the malignant idiocy of George the Third did not prevent his being exalted as highly in the moribund rhetoric of the churchmen of his day as was James in the tropes of the bishops.

Next to George the Third came George the Fourth, whom Mr. Trollope thought Mr. Thackeray ought to have spoken of with respect because the people whom Mr. Thackeray called snobs were well pleased to have him as their king. Here, almost in Sir Henry Maine's own time, were English aristocracy and English respectability at the feet of one of the shamefullest specimens of kinghood that modern mankind has seen; and Sir Henry, making evil cheer over the risk of his countrymen's getting into rough water in the attempt to sail their own boat, cannot find a word of comfort on their having contrived to drift out of that putrid sea. For whom then is Sir Hubert Stanley's praise reserved? What is that condition of the human intellect, that bearing of a nation's forehead, that seems to him manly?

Coming again to our own time, I again disclaim all desire to make a personal attack; though it has to be pointed out that the right to protest against such an attack is forfeited by those who thrust on the world a list of the sovereign's personal virtues, and compel criticism by their measureless eulogies. On this head I will just

say that there are details in the domestic conduct of the reigning sovereign which can call forth nothing but reprobation from men and women with anything like a rounded ethical code; and that in view of these details the all-round laudation now going on is a corruption of practical morals. In the case of a private person, it would be improper to make such items of conduct the ground for a public censure; and were the sovereign treated by the champions of the throne as strictly a political functionary there would be no fair warrant for challenging them with details of her personal action, any more than for commenting on the private life of a Cabinet Minister; though, as it happens, nobody ever scruples to pass judgment on a public man who has figured in the Divorce Court. But when the country is flooded with a literature of venal panegyric on the score of the royal jubilee, it would, I submit, be perfectly justifiable to confute certain of its figments with specific facts. Let us, however, concede that the royal position is in itself a demoralising and perverting one, and accordingly put all particular acts in the background. There remains more than enough in the general and impersonal statement of the situation to provoke grave question.

The situation is, then, that while the country is said to be progressing in culture, it has shown itself, as a whole, no whit nearer getting rid of the central superstition of royalism than it was a generation ago. Monarchism today is as unreasoning, as undignified, as backward as ever. It is still essentially a worship of a sacred family, unqualified by any criticism of the merits of its members. Neither character nor *quasi*-political function having anything to do with the general mental attitude, the appearance of a child of the royal line will make more sensation than that of any celebrity whatever, short of a political party-leader. As the royal *gens* multiplies year by year, it is as scrupulously provided for by the nation as ever was that of Confucius in China, though the chronic grumbling suggests that, like other species, that of royalty in England may one day be found to have pressed too heavily on its means of subsistence. As it is, the random discontent is only one more testimony to the lowering influence of the cult, representing as it does the mere ill-temper of taxpayers at increased outlay on an institution whose moral demerits would be the same, however many thousands it might cost

per annum. In time, doubtless, the mere cost, at the present rate of increase, may bring the demerit home to the general mind. In that case the royalist instinct would be held to have died outright of those irritants which in past times have spoilt the chances of some individual sovereigns. But if the house of Guelph would but pay some heed to Malthus, there seems no reason, as things go, why it should outlive the delusion on which dynasties have hitherto flourished; so potent still is the habit of homage, so scanty the general self-respect, so feeble the reasoning impulse in the average mind, and so far-reaching the forces of perversion. Men of some education can apparently be found in any number to write in good set terms, for the public's reading, of the satisfaction and the good fortune of Britons in having a sovereign and a royal family to love, while some States have none, and of the likelihood of France coming one day to covet similar privileges. Such writers have their audience—the people who call themselves "loyal subjects", drink the Queen's health at public dinners, and cheer when she is seen in the streets. In two English households out of three the coming of the Prince of Wales to the throne of his parent seems as much a matter of course as the daily rising of the sun. The conception of the royal succession is at this moment as strictly a doctrine of divine right as it ever was in history.

III.

As has been said, there is no weighty movement in England for the abolition of the monarchy, and it becomes important to realise what that means. We of these islands have never been lacking in self-complacence; and we have long been wont to regard our national condition, whatever may be the political troubles of the hour, as something peculiarly healthful and majestic in comparison with that of any State of antiquity or of the Middle Ages, except, perhaps, the England of Elizabeth. Our tutors, as Sir Henry Maine, point to the hollowness of French society in past centuries, and exhort us to take joy in and maintain our present—or at least recent—superiority. Yet a resort to the methods of comparison employed by some of these

very authorities would, as we have seen, lead us to conclude that modern England has never been one whit less morally or intellectually unsound, relatively speaking, than any of the so-called corrupt States of the past. At this moment not a writer of standing raises his voice in protest against a *régime* which, as is here contended, is as trivial and despicable as any history records. Its vices are, of course, in keeping with the surroundings. We do not affect gladiatorial shows, and royalty, accordingly, does not promote them. It takes up pigeon-shooting and horse-racing instead. We are little given to murder, and our monarchism is therefore free of such associations. But we contrive that the upper strata in our society shall do as little credit to contemporary civilisation as did the similar strata of the world of Nero, or of Sardanapalus. We in England speak of ours as the age of the telegraph and the electric light, of steam, parliamentary government, and evolution: it does not occur to us that history will write us down also the age of the worship of George the Fourth, of the adulation of the author of the "Journal of Our Life in the Highlands"—the age in which, even as he of the backstairs proclaims, the Prince of Wales gives its "ideal" to "society".

I cannot see that, all things considered, we have any cause to hold ourselves better than our ancestors of Charles the Second's time. The best thinking and teaching of the day, brought beside our performance, reveals us no less unworthy than they, no less false to our best instincts, no less meanly acquiescent in the reign of the tawdry and the vulgar. With our ethics and our philosophy, we are about as poor creatures in our civic life as ever lived. Nay, there was in the Restoration period some remnant of Puritan conscience which, if fanatical, was honorably high-minded: but who to-day, whether in the name of religion or of any national memory, protests against the prostration of the mind of England before enshrined commonplace, transfigured incompetence, and deified inanity? The jubilee is one *banal* chorus of shoddy sentiment, in which all orders of "loyal" intelligence fraternise on the broad ground of bathos. "A bagman's millennium" is the title said to have been given to Cobden's political ideal by an English lady, who had doubtless been presented at court. The year of jubilee, on that scale, should be the millennium of the scullery-maid and the pot-man. And the better sort

are implicated by their consenting silence. If the men of mind and culture in England are to be held to have any share in the national life at all, they are accountable for their utter failure to hold up any better standard to their fellows than that now in force.

Poor Mr. Ruskin has for this many a year been denouncing the unworthiness of the life around him; and what has he had to say on this typical and national vice? Once, that he and Carlyle alone in England at the moment "stood for God and the Queen"—an announcement which must have given great comfort to the pair of powers in question, whatever effect it had on Carlyle. The latter moralist, if incapable of such superlative rant, never once raised his voice against the royalist sham. There has been, in fact, all along a conspiracy of silence on this subject among those writers who were not in a conspiracy of cant. The reception of the Queen's last book is a proof. A Macaulay could perhaps again be found to chastise a second Montgomery, if need were; but Macaulay was not the man to speak out about the Queen's diaries; and the literary class does not appear to include one who will, or an editor who would let him. Only among men who have set their faces against imposture in general—among Freethinkers—has there been more than a whisper of dispraise. The nearest approach to honest speech in ordinary current literature was in the most advanced of the reviews, and there the protest was so absurdly ceremonious and diffident as to make the obsession of the national mind only the more obvious. It was as if the *Times* should regretfully and respectfully but firmly demur to the fatuities of an after-dinner speech by an elderly officer, unaccustomed to public speaking. One thought of the clerical criticism of "the extraordinary conduct of Judas Iscariot".

Now while it is difficult to suppose that the absence of any avowed utterance on such a matter from the leading literary men of the day arises from a general acquiescence on their part in the common tone, it is almost equally difficult to understand their thus keeping silence if they at all deplored what was going on. A particular habit of public speech really cannot go on unchallenged for generations without getting into minds of the better order as well as the worse. And nearly every other species of public folly has been derided more or less extensively. The

platitudes and absurdities of mere patriotism, the claptrap of parties, the commonplaces of political argument and newspaper rhetoric—all these have been held up to the light by writers of authority; but the same critics stedfastly hold aloof from the topic of royalism. What, then, are we to infer? Sir Henry Maine, noting how in the generation after Rousseau it was the fashion in France to talk of a past golden age, says of the "countless" essays written on that theme before 1789, that "they furnish very disagreeable proof that the intellectual flower of a cultivated nation may be brought, by fanatical admiration of a social and political theory, into a condition of downright mental imbecility". This is extravagant enough, in all conscience, as a description of the intellect of France before the revolution; but here again one's uppermost sensation is curiosity as to what Sir Henry's line of criticism would lead to if applied impartially. Is a literary belief in a bygone golden age really more imbecile than the adoration of a Prince Albert or a Queen Victoria by the mass of a nation, whether by way of countless ambitious and costly monuments—much more durable, unhappily, than essays—or of a year of jubilee? We have heard a good deal of the blind hysterics of the Celt, from poets and others not quite undistinguished for hysteria; but can Gaul point to any kind of national demonstration more significant of brainless sentiment than that made in England over the Prince of Wales's recovery from an illness? Yet the intellectual flower of the nation have never done aught but countenance these doings.

To see the bearings of the literary complaisance towards the throne, let us make a list of some of the best known writers on questions of public morals—the writers who are accustomed to comment on our social and intellectual conditions, to hold up ideals, and to condemn shortcomings. Take the names of Mr. Spencer, Mr. Arnold, Mr. Harrison, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Leslie Stephen, Mr. Hutton, Mr. Goldwin Smith. These gentlemen are accustomed, with varying emphasis, frequency, and accuracy, to point out the weak points in our manners and morals; and one can scarcely conceive their entirely ignoring a particular public vice, recognised by them as such, provided there were nothing "unsavory", as Mrs. Grundy's phrase goes, in the discussion of it. Seeing therefore that none of them have ever dwelt explicitly on the phænomena of royalism,

we are shut up to one of two conclusions—either that they do not see anything ignoble or vulgar or demoralising in the matter, or that they are deterred by the force of the reigning convention from speaking their minds. It would be difficult to say which of these conclusions is the more unwelcome. The first would imply that all that has been said in the foregoing pages of the unworthiness of the royalist superstition applies in some measure to these writers; the second, plainly by far the more probable, implies that, while professing to act as serious and responsible critics of the national life, to rebuke fearlessly and to counsel earnestly, they have timorously or weakly held their tongues where it much behoved them to speak out.

What, for instance, does Mr. Arnold think of the question before us? He has claimed—not loudly, but with some right—to have set before his countrymen warnings as to their failings and their follies; and he evidently has their higher welfare at heart. He believes in equality, and points to that as a condition of national well-being. Does he then suppose that men in general are going to attain intellectual maturity and dignity while continuing to kiss the steps of the throne as they have done? Supposing the marrying of one's deceased wife's sister to be really as tasteless a proceeding as he represents, is there much good in hammering away at an idiosyncrasy of that sort while the collective taste and tone of the nation are perpetually being vulgarised and degraded by the worship of the "ideals", and the personalities, presented to it by royalty? And the Queen's books? Mr. Arnold would perhaps reason that monarchism cannot be attacked without some reflexions on living royal personages; and that such criticism is to be deprecated; but I cannot find that he has acted on such scruples in other cases where personal matters were bound up with broad questions. I cannot see why the Queen's book should escape judgment any more than Bishop Colenso's. If Mr. Arnold is simply deterred by his official position from saying anything about royalism whatever, I can only say that it is very unfortunate that he should have so gagged himself. And it is a curious official gag which leaves him free to write down Mr. Gladstone, and the policy of any Government, but keeps him silent as to the institution of the sovereignty.

To Mr. Spencer, again, applies the general objection which lies against Sir Henry Maine on this issue. The

philosopher complains, rightly enough, of the looseness and inconsistency of the bulk of political thinking; and he has commented weightily on various anti-social tendencies. Almost alone among public men he has condemned military immorality. Yet, whatever he may suggest as to the development of political institutions, he has no passage that I can recall on the general aspect and influence of the royalist cult among us. He, too, would seem to count on getting men to advance while keeping their minds on one important point in a state of paralysis or abasement. All schools are alike in this regard. Mill and Carlyle, from their different standpoints, touched royalism as gingerly as they were emphatic on other themes. Nobody with literary authority will speak, and John Bull goes on unweariedly bellowing his loyalty.

But it is to Sir Henry Maine in particular, after all, that the appeal for consistency may most fitly be addressed. Nobody has been more distinct in insisting on the necessity of a lucid and dignified cast of mind to a nation which seeks to govern itself, and nothing could exceed the rigor of his criticisms, unless it be the eccentricity with which he applies his canons. On his view, popular folly and lack of self-respect is the most serious danger to democratic or semi-democratic States; and it is surely impossible to believe that such an acute critic can really look with satisfaction on the *rôle* now played in England by the royal family, or on the response made by the people. Such a keen analyst of claptrap cannot reasonably be conceived as throwing up his hat for the family virtues of the Queen, and for the blessedness of a nation which has such a royal house as ours to love and honor for so benignly presiding over its destinies. To think of Sir Henry Maine as an average courtier or "loyal subject" would be to class his last book as the product of spleen and prejudice, and himself as a partisan instead of a philosophic political thinker. We all, on the contrary, whether we agree with him or not, regard his as an efficient and vigorous mind, incapable of the mere inherited imbecilities of aristocrats and snobs. Why then is he so absolutely silent on what is, to say the least, the worst weakness, the most enfeebling intellectual vice of this community, regarded as a political whole? Again, if we are not to class the moralist with the mob, there is but one answer—that, however, he may denounce particular shams and delusions, there is one

sham he winks at, one delusion before which he smugly dissembles.

Once more—and now the inquiry becomes more than ever practical—what is the notion as to royalism in the minds of those who declare that social conditions will not be tolerable before they are utterly revolutionised? Of all the extravagances of the Socialists of what may be called, for want of a better term, the Slap-Bang school, none is more glaring than this, that they vociferously demand the speedy adoption of that social system which most emphatically requires a high standard of citizenship, without even proposing to get along without an institution which, as here contended, is the negation of such a standard. The only Socialist programme before the British public makes no specific mention whatever of royalism. It can hardly be supposed that this means attachment to the throne, or even a willingness to retain the monarchy as part of the constitution; it can only signify a feeling that to agitate for the abolition of the monarchy at present would be useless, though it is far from clear on what grounds it is held that certain other suggestions in the same programme are more immediately practicable. What then does this imply? That the programme-makers count on, or hope for, the realisation of a polity of enlightened altruism in a society which is unable to rise to such a point of self-respect as to give over adoring the members of a particular family because they are of royal descent. Inconsequence could no further go. It was bad enough—mad enough—to imagine that Socialism could be accomplished off-hand in a society in which—as regards its commerce—the self-regarding impulses are relatively about as deeply-rooted as those of a herd of wolves. But to suppose that the revolution would be effected without even a beginning of upward political progress in the substitution of a true democratic spirit for the ignoble temper which cherishes monarchy—this was to attain the very topmost degree of forethoughtlessness, the sublimity of political unwisdom.

Where, then, are we to look for better things? I can offer but one answer, and that is conditional. The one quarter in which there has ever appeared any marked feeling of healthy aversion to the monarchy as such, apart from incidental grievances as to its operation, is that of the working classes, chiefly those of London. There may be

plenty of room for criticism as to the fashion in which the feeling at times manifests itself; but it is inconceivable to me that it can ever be so foolish or so gross as the fashion to which it is opposed; and at worst these Republicans of the populace have kept on record an honorable protest when, save for one or two democratic politicians—latterly, I believe, only one—the whole of the rest of England hugged humilation. To the people, then, if anywhere, the Republican has to look for his party.

IV.

From the point of view here taken, what is first to be desired in a movement for the abolition of the monarchy is that it shall be deliberate and persistent. It may or may not be that the actual abolition, supposed to be in store, will take an orderly shape: there is indeed, as Sir Henry Maine has sought to show, and as has been above urged, no such decisive reason for counting on the peaceful abolition, as some democratic writers have assumed. It may be that the present era of civilisation will spend itself without our reaching even that much of democratic fruition in the countries now monarchic. That, however, would mean that our civilisation is already rotting towards collapse; in which case it would matter nothing what forecasts we now make; so that the only practical course is to reason on the assumption that the removal of all thrones is not only feasible but likely; and that it behoves us to be active in preparing the way. Now, one of the most obvious weaknesses of democratism[1] among us is the tendency to make important reforms turn on accidents. The late furore about the House of Lords is an instance. That movement, controlled as it was by a statesman whose policy is above all things opportunist, rose and fell in such a way as to imply the condemnation of most of those concerned. The attack on the House of Lords for fulfilling its ostensible function was a mere partisan immorality if the assailants did not believe that the function ought not to exist; and if such was their belief they wrote themselves down shufflers, in so far as they willingly gave over

[1] "Democracy", as its latest critic feelingly insists, "is a form of Government". I use the term "democratism" to designate democratic tendencies and impulses in general.

the campaign. To judge from the result, the talk of "mending or ending" was mainly braggadocio, and none the less so because it terrorised the enemy. The Upper House is neither mended nor ended; and the gentlemen who threatened these alternatives appear to go on their way without chagrin. Even the "People's League", formed for the express purpose of carrying on the movement, visibly declined in its zeal when the immediate pretext was removed; some of the leading politicians who joined it being found to discourage the idea of a steady and strenuous activity towards the purpose in view, and to recommend instead a lying in wait until the House of Lords should again do something to irritate the majority. It is not the people who are unwilling to respond; it is their ostensible leaders who fail to keep any principle, as such, steadily before them, and make legislation a game of campaigns and stratagems, panics, spurts, intrigues, and revivals. These are not the methods of principled politics; and if Republicanism is thus to make headway merely by turning to account the indiscretions or misdeeds of members of the royal family, half the moral gain that might accrue from the process will be lost. In so far as it might make capital in that fashion, indeed, it would be no worse than other political movements in general; but one hopes that it will spread rather by means of a simple perception of the essential unmanliness and unworthiness of the monarchic cult as such—of the incurable discord between its whole phænomena and the profession of self-government.

Much, indeed, might be said as to the mere financial burden represented by the monarchy. It is one of the demoralising elements in the royal position that it involves, over and above the pressure of social conditions as they are, a further grinding of the faces of the poor, and a fleecing of the merest paupers, to maintain the idle splendors of the throne and its domestic appendages. But still one would rather that the people should look at the central evil, and not merely at the minor consequence. The real harm of royalism lies not nearly so much in the wasting of some million sterling per annum as in the sapping of the nation's self-respect, and in the partial paralysis of the impulses which make for political advance. Worse than the intensifying of material poverty—bad enough as that may be—is that poverty of the spirit which

is in no sense blessed. A movement for the abolition of monarchy, then, should be above all things a moral movement, and would come even more fitly from the ranks of culture than from those of the poor.

The survey of the situation, however, goes to show, as we have seen, that the ranks of culture are standing very much at ease under the *régime* of shoddy and inanity, thinking much less about their own vulgar compromises and mean conformities than about the dangers arising from the misguided sincerities of the lower orders. Consequently the chances are that it will be left to the rank and file of Radicalism to bring the question to the front in its own way, with what of uproar and asperity belongs to a cause denied a hearing in high places. And this process, be it remembered, involves certain risks. If we are not entitled to assume with Mr. Bancroft that there is going on an obvious evolution towards democracy, equally little have we the right to suppose that the long spell of peaceful transition we have had in England will never be broken by a crash. To say nothing of the spectacle in Germany and Russia, we can see in Denmark at this moment a distinct possibility of a collision between a patient people and a foolishly obstinate king; and history shows that these collisions tend to communicate their impulses. Now, there is a certain amount of inflammable material in England at this moment, and it is not very difficult to conceive that the apparent complicity of the upper and educated classes in such a flagrant abuse as the monarchy, with its futility, its cost, its hollowness, and its greed, may at a critical moment be interpreted by discontent as a proof that these classes are as unfit to survive as the monarchy itself. What such a view might lead to is a matter for speculation.

In any case, this much is clear, that those who now try to remove the central blot from our system of self-government are striving to purify the state; while those who would callously leave it, or who deny that it is a blot at all, are promoters of social corruption. It is idle for the Conservative moralist to prate of the dangers of popular ignorance and demagoguism while he constitutes a living proof that culture can tolerate and even champion the grossest political impostures. He is himself the worst of charlatans, the type noted by Carlyle—and perhaps in part exemplified by him—in which the traffic in empty

phrases leads in the long run to sheer hallucination. The restive proletarian has some hold on fact; his own discontent is a leading political fact of the time; and the demagogue is dealing with solid things even if he be insincere —that, indeed, is the Conservative's complaint. But, once more, what shall we say of the political ideal in which loyalty to the throne is a constant quantity; and a vista of reigns such as the present, with starry points of jubilee, constitutes the historic future? What of "God Save the Queen" as a marching-song for civilised humanity? Let the demagogue do his worst, his claptrap is at a discount while his royalist critic keeps the field.

This, then, is the upshot, that if the "men of light and leading" will do nothing to purge the commonweal of a cult which is at once a superstition and a vice, the movement must come from the people, where its germs have so long lain—that is, if it is ever to come to vigorous growth at all. And the alternative, I repeat, is a spreading moral paralysis, which means a great failure of civilisation. On the one hand a consummation of the national life in all ignobleness, on the other a forward movement towards a real democracy. For not only does the democratic principle theoretically exclude the form as well as the substance of monarchy, but democracy remains a mere formula while men are capable of supposing that the shell of monarchy subserves any political good. If we are unable to carry on our Parliamentary Government without a pretended centre of authority and fountain of honor in a sacred family, then the fact that the sovereign is a political nullity both in theory and in practice, does not hinder us from being far below the point of democratic efficiency. The phænomena of the throne and the second chamber jointly constitute a proof that we do not really trust the principle of self-government. While that is so we are clearly not self-governing at all; and it is equally clear that we never shall be until we actually take the step of removing our sham safeguards. Not till the nation deliberately exercises its political will without that abject avowal of fear of itself which is the formula of the second chamber, will it cease to have need to fear itself. Its fear and its danger are correlatives. And just so it is with the throne. We shall never be fit to be Republicans until we are ashamed of being Monarchists. We shall always be fit to crawl before and kiss the feet of clay until we bury the image.

TORYISM AND BARBARISM.

By JOHN ROBERTSON.

"In the involuntary errors of the *understanding* there can be little to excite, or at least to justify, resentment. That which alone, in a manner, calls for rigid censure, is the sinister bias of the *affections*."—*Bentham.*

"The past turns to snakes."—*Emerson.*

"The chief causes of the low morality of savages, as judged by our standard, are, firstly, the confinement of sympathy to the same tribe. Secondly, powers of reasoning insufficient to recognise the bearing of many virtues . . . . on the general welfare of the tribe."—*Darwin.*

No man who has seen anything of the world, be he enthusiast or cynic, will expect to find in any public association or party a complete immunity from any form of personal misconduct. Liberal and Conservative, Christian and Freethinker, Protestant and Catholic, if candid, will alike admit that there are black sheep on their own side of the hedge and white ones on the other; rightness of opinion, from any point of view, being no guarantee of moral merit, any more than ordinary good conduct involves high intelligence. A fair-minded party-man or disputant, therefore, will never urge against any school or set of opinions the fact that specific vices can be charged against certain individuals who adhere to it. The canons of fair impeachment will only allow the contention that if a particular way of thinking is found to be frequently associated with a form of wrong-doing which is markedly less common among those who think differently, the onus of self-vindication lies with the party stigmatised. And as party controversy is usually neither fair nor methodical, it may be set down that a large number of the imputations most usual in politics and polemics are either false or exaggerated; and indeed it is understood to be one of the charms of the higher politics, as prosecuted in Parliament, that you converse amicably with men whom you publicly proclaim to be the allies of assassins; and courteously send to congratulate on his improved health the personage whom you brand as the destroyer of his country's liberties. "The man who loudly denounces," says Goethe, "I always suspect"—of what, is not quite clear, but we may assume insincerity. It is needless to examine in detail, then, the general charges of turpitude brought by rival parties

against each other as wholes, and against leaders in particular. Such charges have their foundation, such as it is, in the scattered acts of unfairness, equivocation, dishonesty, and treachery which are committed by a number of individuals under varying circumstances—acts more or less inexcusable, but practically inevitable at the present stage of moral progress. Besides, it lies on the surface that in many cases measure of inconsistency—or tergiversation, as the accuser is pretty sure to call it—is made the measure of imputed criminality; whereas the more a man knows of human nature the more clearly does he see, if he will be candid, that the most striking, the most speedy, and the most extreme changes of view on a particular point may be made in perfect sincerity. Such changes, of course, are proofs of weakness of some sort—weakness of perception, of purpose, or of reasoning power; and are not to be lightly condoned as such. It is difficult to say which of the prominent party leaders of modern times—Peel, Disraeli, Gladstone, or Salisbury—has the most humiliating record of intellectual vacillation, of hasty belief and hasty conversion, thoughtless denial and thoughtless assertion, standing against him in the passionless compilation of "Hansard"; and it will be bad for posterity if these men's successors do not learn something of self-criticism and forethought from a study of their careers. For the rest, however, it is plain that the moral is pointed with nearly equal clearness all round. And something is perhaps to be allowed for the stress of the practical difficulties of statesmanship in such a State as ours, where the traditions and the exigencies of party Government make it so hard for leaders to maintain perfect singleness of purpose. If Mr. Bright has stood almost alone among our great politicians in his character for honesty, it is not improbably because he has had so little to do with actual Ministerial work; for even he is found to incur a charge of inconsistency in connexion with his last tenure of office; his withdrawal, on its merits, being somewhat tardy.

To find a statesman turn his back on himself, then, and to find his party turn with him, is not to convict him or them of any uncommon flagitiousness. If Lord Salisbury took service under a man whom he had denounced as an unscrupulous adventurer, Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, collaborated with one whom he had accused of meanmindedness; and Sir William Harcourt has vociferously

sung the praises of a leader whom he once bitterly derided. Even the assumption of Lord Randolph Churchill into the Cabinet, if it casts into the shade all previous surrenders of embarrassed statesmen to detested domestic foes, is not a political transaction unique in kind in the annals of either party. In short, the most frequently discussed charges in party warfare are common property and of a common application; and in the present study of Tory morals I shall adopt none of these commonplaces of platform recrimination. There is, indeed, some reason to question whether the recent tactics of the Conservative leaders do not represent an unprecedented lowering of the political standard of morals. The brazen avowal that criticism in opposition is one thing and action in office another; the unabashed concession to and alliance with the Home Rule party after the unmeasured denunciations of the "Kilmainham treaty" and the impassioned demands for coercion in Ireland—these are certainly most conspicuous displays of political improbity. Still, while this is noted, it must be remembered that such a policy is only an extension of the moral licence permitted themselves by party leaders on both sides for generations past. If Mr. Gladstone has not expressly discriminated between his words in opposition and his course in power, it must not be forgotten that in one important particular, to say nothing of others, he has utterly abstained from doing what he easily might to support a profession of principle made by him before his last accession to office. Nothing could be more impressive, more apparently sincere, than his præ-triumphal declaration that the people of these kingdoms ought to have the power of deliberating in Parliament on the expediency of any war in which Ministers desired to embark; and nothing could be more complete than his virtual repudiation of that principle since. He has made war as madly, as mistakenly, as unpardonably as ever did his antagonists; and though his Cabinet has shown some redeeming sensitiveness to just blame, he has perhaps personally carried his policy with as high a hand as the worst of his predecessors. The reminiscence is an evil one for those who have been deceived in him: let it be dismissed with the confession that righteousness in dealings with the inferior races cannot be dwelt on as a virtue which notably distinguishes Liberal from Conservative thus far; and let it at the same time be allowed that Mr. Gladstone's shifty prevarications go some little way to balance the bolder falsities of his

rival; though the elder casuist has in fairness to be credited with his recent confession of error—a confession probably not to be paralleled in the history of British statesmanship.

What, then, is to be taken as a test of the comparative development of morality among political parties? Is there any test that can fairly be called crucial? I think there is. First let it be asked what are the special vices that a dispassionate inquirer might reasonably expect to find common among Liberals and Conservatives respectively? If we assume, as we reasonably may, that political sympathies are the result of a certain bias of mind and feeling, it is fair to suppose that they will generally consist with a particular intellectual or moral flaw. Now, it is pretty clear that, comparatively, the special element in Liberalism, historically speaking, is intellectual; while the special element in Conservatism is emotional or affectional; that is to say, the minds which desire change are *ex facto* more speculative, more inquiring, than those which are averse to it. Not that the Liberal is deficient in those sub-rational tendencies which are so strong in the Conservative; but that, in whatever degree he may possess the latter, he has the former in addition; and, keeping this in view, we find it natural that while the Liberal, like the Conservative, has his bad wars to answer for, he is often dead against the other party's wars, while the Conservative is as a rule in favor of any war whatever, and usually condemns the Liberal for not fighting vigorously enough. The element of difference is the intermittent assertion of the Liberal's reasoning faculty, which is obviously and demonstrably the chief factor in all moral progress. The special failing of the Liberal, then, in the terms of the case, is to be looked for on the intellectual side, in that direction in which he constitutionally diverges from his opponent; and it will perhaps be found most philosophic to say that his shortcoming lies in his tendency to believe that his pet set of measures —his "machinery", as Mr. Arnold calls it—will work profound changes in things, or at least will sufficiently modify the world for all practical purposes. Hence the tendency of every generation of Liberals to imagine that their favorite reforms are the consummation of progress. Conservatives may perhaps reject this view, and put it that the Liberal vice is, in the mildest terms, the unreasoning desire for change. As to that, the independent inquirer must be left to decide for himself; as indeed must be the case when we come to diagnose the moral diathesis of the Tory.

On our assumption that the Tory specialty is the supremacy of feeling, commonly so-called, it will follow that his special vices arise from the ebullition of his hereditary impulses. Using the word "defect" in its strict sense, we might say that he is seriously defective in that he entirely lacks the element of mental ferment, so to speak; but it seems hardly fair to blame a man for his entire lack of a particular faculty. Mill struck the right note when he explained that in calling the Conservatives the stupid party he did not mean to say Conservatives were generally stupid, but that stupid people were generally Conservatives—a distinction which will appeal to all accurate thinkers. We do not say, then, that the Tory's vice lies in any defect. It is something positive. In the first place, his lack of speculative turn tends to make him do extreme injustice to the motives of those who have it, and to condone and uphold established injustices; but beyond this he is clearly liable to obey his passions and prejudices to an inordinate degree; which amounts to saying that he is in a serious sense nearer the primitive state than his opponents. I trust the argument is clear thus far, and I challenge a scientific scrutiny of it.

Let it here be granted that the Tory's specialty may at times have its good side—comparatively speaking. While more given to delight in war than the politician of more speculative turn, he may show a generous if ill-judged sympathy where the latter exhibits a somewhat cold caution. If the Tory's taste for intervention is apt to lead to mischief, it is at least not always repugnant to our "better feelings", as they are called; while the prudence of the Manchester School is not always free from a touch of the sordid. On the whole, while bad landlords are only too common, a generous Tory landlord is perhaps as common as a generous Liberal manufacturer. But all this only makes it the clearer that where the Tory's feelings happen to make definitively for evil his wrong-doing will tend to be the more atrocious. If his good feelings tend to outrun judgment, what of his bad? In the terms of the case, he is at his best a species of noble savage, who may do a chivalrous thing on occasion, but who is at any moment capable of working a gross injustice. The question is a scientific one. What is the prominent evil of the barbarous state—the state in which feeling is least trammelled by intellect? Plainly the active injustice of brute force—the sacrifice of every consideration of natural equity to the

impulses of dislike and affection. Tyrannous power, lawless hatred, deliberate and complacent injury—these are the salient moral phænomena of barbarism. The barbarian, who is a bundle of emotions controlled by no tribunal of reflection, but swaying him to good or evil as they happen to be stimulated without or within—the out-and-out emotionalist knows nothing of right and wrong beyond the narrowest limits. Towards his enemy he is absolutely unscrupulous; and where he has given his allegiance he is uncritically, brutally obedient. So, *mutatis mutandis*, with the unspeculative political emotionalist of to-day. The history of Liberalism shows no such blind obedience of rank and file to leader as we find in Toryism. Peel might be cold-shouldered, but Disraeli's after-career showed that, if he knows his business, mere change of front need lose no Tory leader a handful of his followers. It was not for a reasoned principle that they joined his flag, and once he has got hold of them by their instincts he may manipulate his and their official creed as he pleases. All party Government tends to develop unconscientious obedience; but it is past all question that Conservatives have carried it to a maximum. It is very idle for them to retort on their opponents the stigma of "mechanical majority" when they seek at the same time to make their chief capital out of the known discordancy of the elements of the Liberal party. Fortunately for themselves, the Liberals' claim to unity of creed falls to the ground before the competing programmes; while the readiness of the antagonist body to follow its leaders *en masse* anywhere is plain to a demonstration. The Churchill scandal is no disproof. That is essentially a transient trouble. A section of "dolphins" there might indeed be who grinningly encouraged Lord 'Arry to discomfit his elders; but there was no schism of opinion whatever; and his absorption into the bosom of the family brings about a delighted fraternisation throughout the ranks. It was with the Churchill sub-faction as with the faction proper—the ruling impulses were personal feeling and the instinct of pugnacity; and the reunion is as purely a matter of temper as the dissension. Lord 'Arry was the natural leader for the more puerile minds of the party, appealing to them as he did with no reasoned doctrine whatever, but tickling their ears with a series of *ad captandum* proposals of various kinds, effectively flavored with invariable vituperation of the other side. That, by the way, is a constant aspect of

the Tory specialty. Liberals are not without the faculty of invective, but in practice we find, what in theory we might expect, a much less constant resort to it on their part than on that of their opponents. Mr. Gladstone, with all his serious faults, may be cited as a decisive illustration of the Liberal superiority in that direction; his most impassioned impeachments of, say, Lord Beaconsfield, being amenity itself beside that statesman's attacks on Peel. Beaconsfield, of course, was in no sense either a sincere or a typical Conservative, and owed his success entirely to his clear perception of the nature of the Conservative idiosyncrasy; so that Lord Salisbury is the better antithesis to point to. The contrast in that case becomes decisive; his lordship's every speech, almost, containing some abusive references to one or other of his leading antagonists; while Mr. Gladstone hardly ever flings a personality in return; and even Mr. Chamberlain's attacks are impersonal and dignified in comparison with the angry insolences and unmeasured imputations of the Marquis. The latter is above all things the *beau sabreur*, the wrathful assailant, prone to charge, barbarian-like, without regard to his following. He is the Berserker of politics.

But his supremacy in scurrility is clearly the less serious aspect of the Tory's vice. If that were all, it might be dismissed as amounting to the venomous shrewishness of consciously inferior strength; but there is worse behind. His capacity for brutal injustice, always frightfully prompt of exercise where there is a chance of coercing, is specially at the service of any movement of tyrannous fanaticism that chimes with his prejudices. The worst oppressor of Ireland, the bigoted persecutor of struggling sects, he is in his element when he gets an opportunity of denying an Atheist his constitutional rights; and he adds insult to injury, cowardly slander to gross iniquity, with a zest that sometimes makes it difficult to conceive him as in some respects a civilised personality, with decent habits and some inoffensive tastes. Here, at length, is our crucial test. The authentic mark of the beast, the stamp of the savage, is the shameless assertion of force where passion prompts, in absolute disregard of every appeal to natural right or established law; and precisely such a shameless, lawless, iniquitous denial of an unquestionable civil right has been perpetrated with almost complete unanimity by the Conservative party in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh. It has been said that the blame of that injustice lies with those Liberals

who were false to the principles of their party in the matter; but anyone who studies the question dispassionately will see in that defection the last proof of the fundamental connexion between Tory instinct and the worst kind of social wrong-doing.

What are the facts? That Mr. Gladstone, notoriously an eager, emotional Christian, explicitly declared the clear right of the disbarred member to sit. I should be the last person to eulogise the ex-Premier for his slack and reluctant championship of the cause of simple justice in this matter; but though he has stood coldly by while the wrong was being endured, the fact remains that he so far did violence to his religious sympathies as to make even an emphatic declaration on the side of fair-play; and in this he was supported by a majority of his party; while Mr. Bright made a chivalrous demonstration on the same side. On the other hand, there came from the Conservative side not a solitary word of the dictates of justice; not an admission of the hardship that was being inflicted; nothing but a dastardly chorus of boorish contumely and currish hostility—the outcry of a body of upper-class rowdies indecently delighting in the oppression of a man in whom they saw an enemy, and by wronging whom they hoped to strengthen their cause among their fellow barbarians. Now, it lies on the face of the matter that the action of the Conservatives in the House of Commons was not the outcome of religious earnestness. The pretence that it was so, and that the opposite attitude of Messrs. Gladstone and Bright came of sympathy with Atheism, might be pointed to as the crowning achievement in partisan lying, if it were not so entirely ludicrous. Religious belief, no doubt, entered into the matter to a considerable extent. Curious as it may seem, it is perfectly credible to the student of human nature that politicians who make gun-wadding of the decalogue in their wars of aggression may be more or less essentially devout men, with a natural affinity for religious mysteries. To suppose, however, that such men as Beaconsfield, Salisbury, and Iddesleigh have anything like the fervor of religious feeling which is found in Bright and Gladstone, is too absurd. No man of the world, further, will believe for a moment that the Conservative leaders would cast off a follower whom they knew to be an Atheist, supposing he were a libertine into the bargain. That the party includes a few sceptics and a great many libertines is sufficiently notorious; and the party leaders

would no more ostracise these than wear the blue ribbon or refuse to meet a Roman Catholic at dinner. A few of their followers have felt so far coerced by these considerations as to avow that they would not have kept out Mr. Bradlaugh if he had dissembled decorously at the start, like so many other members; and the admission is something. It in no way alters the fact, however, that the pretence of piety has been almost unanimously used by the party to justify what is really an act of pure and simple ruffianism. I use that word advisedly, to express the patent spirit of unhesitating, zealous, impish iniquity which has been displayed in the matter. Coleridge has defined wickedness as "egoism designedly unconscientious"; and if that formula overlaps the Tory action in the case before us it at least partly covers it. The element of deliberate infliction of wrong, which is the chief ingredient in wickedness, is present to the full in their conduct; and if egoism, in the ordinary sense, has not been their inspiration, they figure none the better when we reflect that they have shown a spontaneous delight in tyranny which is commonly associated with the state of savagery, or semi-savage militarism. This may perhaps seem to a calm enquirer an extravagant indictment of the action of a political party; but let him see if any less severe construction can be rightfully put on the episode.

I have said that the defection of a number of Liberals from the cause of religious freedom is the last proof of the essential connexion of the spirit of Toryism with that of social wrong-doing of the kind under consideration. The Liberals who apostatised were with scarcely an exception men whose politics had been determined by the accidents of heredity or Dissentership; and who, accordingly, had little of the typical Liberal tendency to ratiocination in politics. The Fitzwilliams, for instance, belong to the barbarian class, as Mr. Arnold would say; and Mr. Samuel Morley's is a case in which the exigencies of evangelical life, acting on a conscience of the Bulstrode order, produce a line of action to fully parallel which we must go back a few centuries in history. The kind of pietism which in Mr. Gladstone is regulated by a highly developed intelligence, is in him an incalculable hysterical force; and his oscillation from his præ-election frenzy of partisanship to his subsequent religious remorse, marks him out as a mediæval survival. In his way, he too belongs to the Tory type. It may be urged that the effort implied in the

abstention of the Liberal members in question is a proof of their sincerity, and no doubt that is so, up to a certain point. That is to say, the hostility and the fanaticism which inspired them were genuine enough; just as there was a good deal of genuine hostility and fanaticism on the Tory side. But the point is that while dishonest Tories add dishonesty to oppression, the others, and their quasi-Liberal congeners, are constitutionally prone to injustice, and ought, in the interests of society, to be branded as dangerously vicious organisms in that respect. The apostate Liberals acted under the sway of their ineradicated vice, not on an intellectual decision. Had their action been truly and conscientiously political they would have made a more open and explicit profession of their reasons, and would not have merely stayed away from the debates as in so many cases they did. Their policy was the war policy of Bedouins, capable of abandoning a cause at a critical moment for no better reason than superstition and tribal hatred.

It was not the purpose of this paper to look into the tactics of the Home Rulers who have coöperated with their old enemies in the Bradlaugh case; but it is worth pointing out that their action illustrates the whole of the foregoing thesis; and the matter has practical importance for thoughtful students of politics. The deplorable conditions of past Irish life have produced, in the Home Rule party, a body of men whose idiosyncrasy is clearly near that of the Tory in order of development: who, that is to say, are swayed rather by feeling than by the spirit of speculation; though their situation has developed in them a noteworthy species of adroitness in adapting means to ends. The essentially blind and barbarian character of their main impulse—race spirit and national hatred—makes their moral range at least as primitively narrow as that of the typical Conservative; and their public life is consequently a constant outflow of monomaniac passion and prejudice or profligate slander. There was a scientific truth in the observation of the Parliamentary humorist that "a man must have some principles, unless he is a Home Ruler". All they need to act on is an instinct. Thus we may, unhappily, look to them for the very grossest displays of shameless injustice, and, setting aside as we here may their other misdeeds, we find such a display in their treatment of Mr. Bradlaugh. To the guilt of the Tories they have added that of an unspeakable ingratitude—such ingratitude as

belongs to an almost premoral state of things. All Mr. Bradlaugh's services to their nation, his strenuous vindication of its rights when these were for the most part callously ignored in England, his constant sympathy with the Irish people in their hardships, have been not merely overlooked but denied, and calumny has been bestowed where gratitude and help were due. Of all the clouds on the prospect before the Irish people this is perhaps the darkest, that their representatives, with sins enough to answer for where they had some pretext for resentment, have shown themselves capable of doing with light hearts a reckless wrong to a tried benefactor whom they thought it politic to repudiate. Mr. Bradlaugh, when in the House, moved the rejection of the Coercion Bill when the Home Rule leader had timorously deserted his post, and he has had his reward in a hostility and vilification which have out-Toried the Tories. And why? First, because the craven leader, thus compromised, became an unscrupulous enemy, and, having a body of dependent followers chiefly of the emotional and prejudiced type, has been able to sway them to his purposes; secondly, because Ireland is mainly Roman Catholic, and ready to obey its priests so long as they do not resist its main political bias. There are perhaps some other causes, which may one day be made clear.

But if such a state of things promises ill for the moral or social progress of Ireland, no less do the kindred phænomena of Tory barbarism suggest future trouble in England. Let the unprejudiced reader judge. In the course of the present electoral campaign, of all the hundreds of Conservative candidates who have spoken, certainly not not more than a dozen [I speak under correction: I have only noted four] have consented to so much as support an Affirmation Bill; while of all the hundreds of Liberal candidates, not more than a dozen, if so many, have declared against admitting Atheists to Parliament. And while the Liberals have in certainly the majority of cases protested that they have no sympathy with Mr. Bradlaugh's views, and have thus evidently acted on an intellectual decision, the majority of the Tories have seized the opportunity to more or less brutally vilify the man they are seeking to crush. The language of their aristocrats has in many cases literally been the language of blackguards—one of the decisive evidences of reversion to a prior ancestral type. But it is not only the thinly-veneered bar-

barians who thus testify to the prevailing tendency of Toryism: the tactics of the leaders clearly point to a calculation that to wrong the Atheist is the profitable course to take. Lord Iddesleigh, sometimes complimented by Liberal journalists in an expansive mood as being a gentleman in comparison with his colleagues, was long ago legible to closer observers as a weak tool, incapable of winning adherence to his own views, and always ignobly ready to compromise them rather than offend his half-supporters. But Lord Iddesleigh's course in the Bradlaugh case has been something worse than ignoble. He is recognisably, by rights, not a typical Tory, but a weak Liberal—that is, a man with a certain endowment of the intellectual qualities which dispose men to Liberalism, and no great share of the barbarism which makes them Tories; but his weakness has kept him where his lot was first cast, in the Tory camp; and the effect of his surroundings has been to gradually worsen him, till his thinking faculty appears chiefly to serve him to lend himself with blundering caution to the brutality in which he has no natural part. His action in this matter has been that of a man who saw clearly enough what was the reasonable thing to do, and who, without the barbarian's excuse of innate ruffianism, yet conformed to the bias of the worst members of his party and ultimately became their mere catspaw, stultifying himself in the process with a facility only less memorable than his moral collapse. So that the man who might have been a decent Liberal becomes in the Tory environment, in a sense, even worse than his surroundings, he doing against his lights what the others do because of lack of light; even as, it is said, when white men settle down among savages they tend to become more slothful and depraved even than their neighbors. It is perhaps well that such a personage as this should be shelved in the House of Lords, out of the way of the strife that may be to come.

Perhaps even a more convincing illustration, to some minds, of the evil influence of the Tory cult on those within its sphere, is to be found in the case of Mr. Arthur J. Balfour, nephew of Lord Salisbury, and late member of the Fourth Party. That gentleman, who is a cultured metaphysician, has written an able and interesting book entitled "A Defence of Philosophic Doubt", in which, with much literary and dialectic skill, he supplements the philosophic achievement of Hume by a demonstration that the beliefs of those of us who call ourselves Rationalists, in

regard to the persistence of Law in Nature, have no better ultimate foundation than the constitutional tendency to take a scientific view, while a tendency to believe in mythology is similarly the sole foundation of Mr. Balfour's belief in the religious mysteries on which he spiritually subsists. I believe Rationalists are not unwilling to endorse Mr. Balfour's sceptical philosophy, and are content to explain that organisms of his type, with a constitutional thirst for avowedly unintelligible mysteries, are in process of disappearing, while the scientific type of mind is destined to survive. But I wish here to point out how strikingly Mr. Balfour's conduct in the Bradlaugh case establishes the conclusion that psychologically he represents a transient reversion to a primitive type. He has recently spoken in public on the subject to the following effect:—

"Mr. Hopkinson was of opinion that disabilities on account of opinions on religion ought to be removed at once, and an Affirmation Bill passed. He [Mr. Balfour] did not share that opinion—(applause)—and he would explain why. The practical object of an Affirmation Bill would be to enable Mr. Bradlaugh, who was already prepared to take the oath, to enter the House without taking it. Nobody could deny that to bring in a Bill and deliberately exclude belief in God from the oath taken by a member of Parliament would meet with great opposition, and, mistakenly or not, it would undoubtedly shock the most respectable feelings of the country. He would ask Mr. Hopkinson whether he was prepared to delay public business by introducing a Bill which it would cause a large amount of friction to pass. 'If I have any say in the matter', Mr. Balfour added, 'it will not be one of the first duties of Parliament when it meets to bring in an Affirmation Bill.'"

It would be difficult to imagine anything more nakedly discreditable than the tone here taken. There is not a word of justice or principle: the sole pretext is that many people, to whom Mr. Balfour is pleased to attribute the "most respectable feelings of the country," would be shocked, "mistakenly or not"; on which ground Mr. Balfour would deny Atheists their civil rights for ever and a day—for if there is any meaning in his despicable plea about shocking respectable feelings it will hold good at any time as well as when Parliament meets. I do not pretend to estimate how far Mr. Balfour—who certainly knows something of how the intelligence of the nation is distributed—is sincere in his account of what are the most respectable feelings in the country; but I submit that

whatever feelings underlie the nefarious policy he adopts will ere long cease to be respectable in the eyes of decent men. If religion is to be the sole and constant excuse for conduct of deliberate turpitude, the end will be that religion will acquire the infamy of the proceedings it is used to sanction.

Let the bigot and the aristocrat look to it. They have been teaching that tyrannous prejudice may be "respectable" when it inflicts outrageous wrong on a few; and they have also been wont to say there is a danger that the prejudices of the working classes, if given legislative effect to, may inflict wrong on the owners of property. It is possible; though the assurance comes from such authorities. The singular thing is that they thus persistently exhibit to those working classes their own perfect readiness to inflict a monstrous wrong when it suits them to do so, or when they can gratify their own or their allies' enmities by doing it; and that all the while they produce no better reason than that it is their pleasure so to do. Now, the working classes of this country are every day becoming less actively superstitious, and they are at least not growing less disposed to resent iniquitous tyranny, wherever exercised; nor are they remarkable for a capacity to forget those who have espoused their cause. Mr. Bright has averred his belief that they care as little for the dogmas of Christianity as the upper classes care for its practice: however that may be, it is certain that they are now less likely than ever to tolerate an act of high-handed oppression, perpetrated chiefly at the instance of aristocrats, plutocrats, and churchmen, and zealously assisted-in by Papist prelates and unscrupulous Home Rulers. Prejudice might come in there; though, taking them all over, the working classes are less given to act oppressively on the promptings of prejudice than any other class in the community. If there were not abundant proof of this in the past, the facts we have been considering would supply enough. Mr. Arnold, in his famous classification of his fellow-creatures as "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace," lays it down that the characteristic of the populace is to crush by brute force those who oppose it; founding his opinion, apparently, on the Hyde Park riots, so-called, in which connexion, with unwonted facility in fallacy, he has omitted to notice that brute force had been used against the populace to begin with. Mr. Arnold would probably admit to-day, in respect of the Bradlaugh case at least, that blind force has been

employed without scruple by the Barbarians and the Philistines; while the populace have remained patient for five years under the outrage done to the man whom Mr. Arnold singled out as their typical leader—that leader all the while fighting his case with scrupulous legality, and never hinting at any appeal to that force of the populace which he is admittedly able to sway. Mr. Arnold will have to revise his formula.

Popular patience might, of course, give way one day; and it is reassuring to be able to conclude that it will not be tried much longer. But nothing can now alter what has been done, and the lesson of the whole matter for the populace is, as has been said, one that bodes ill for the Conservatives. The people have seen what is the real value of upper-class declamations about justice and class prejudices: they are able to judge of the attitude of mind which is devout about the "sacred rights of property" and is more than willing to violate the rights of citizenship. They have had reason in other ways to scrutinise the devotion to established Christianity professed by men who, as M. Rochefort puts it, make cigarette papers of the Bible; and if there be any risk of their forgetting all these things there are some who will take pains to provide that they shall not. The dice of political destiny are accordingly being loaded against the Salisburys and Balfours, the priests and "respectabilities". But is that all that is to be apprehended?

If there is any force in what has been urged in these pages as to the fundamental barbarism of Tory instinct, it follows either that Toryism must crumble away or that it will manifest itself in various fashions in the near future. Some years ago people began to say that Toryism proper was nearly extinct; but the facts we have discussed have shown how hasty was the assumption. The historic spirit of Toryism did but appear to be dying out because for a time the issues tried between parties were such as only divided the upper and middle classes argumentatively among themselves: the moment an efficient test case arises the old temper is found to assert itself freely. And the Bradlaugh case is in all probability the prelude to a period in which the entire remainder not only of downright disability but of Protean privilege will be assailed with a persistency and vigor never seen in British politics before. Here then are the main elements of the political history that is about to be made in England: on the one

hand a Conservative party as essentially anti-popular and tyrannous as ever, as full as ever of upper-class insolence and aristocratic ruffianism; on the other a populace daily becoming more practically educated and more efficiently organised; a populace which has seen the seamy side of Conservative morals unrolled before it with a completeness that leaves nothing to the imagination. And the movement of things at the moment is evidently towards an intensification of Toryism and a counterbalancing development of Liberalism. Some dozen of the apostate Liberals of the late Parliament have either been dismissed from political life or sternly menaced by avenging Radicalism; while on the Tory side, it is plain, the word has gone round to play the card of religion and "respectability". In the ordinary course of things the recrudescence of bigotry over the oath question would have waned in five years, whereas the Conservative attitude on the subject is to-day more determined than it was in 1880; which amounts to saying that the forces of oppression have been deliberately organised and recruited. What are the probable motives of the handful of Conservatives who have approved of an Affirmation Bill it would be invidious to enquire: whether they are all sincerely desirous of seeing one passed, or in the least prepared to push it, is open to question. But in any case their appearance only serves to emphasise the more strongly the damning force of the inference to be drawn from the general Tory policy on the so-called oath question. The slight variation they constitute on the main tendency of Toryism, like the few remnants of determined bigotry on the side of nominal Liberalism, does but establish our conviction that in such an investigation as the present we are dealing with substantial tendencies in human nature, from which we may reason with confidence to a working political philosophy.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

Printed by Annie Besant and Charles Bradlaugh, 63, Fleet St., London.—1885.

SOCIALISM AND MALTHUSIANISM.

BY

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LONDON:
FREETHOUGHT PUBLISHING COMPANY,
63, FLEET STREET, E.C.
1885.

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SOCIALISM AND MALTHUSIANISM.

A REMARKABLE feature in current Socialist propaganda is the almost complete unanimity with which the doctrines of Malthus are there derided, denounced, and repudiated. Alike in the English Socialist journals, in works such as Mr. Gronlund's and Dr. Bebel's, and in semi-Socialistic productions like Mr. George's "Progress and Poverty", that law of population which is one of the foundations of the Darwinian system is bitterly assailed; terms of vituperation being only varied by those of contempt—the latter, however, being too much flavored with wrath to carry any impression of real intellectual security. Such a state of things—whatever be the truth as to the point in dispute—is in itself sufficient to dispose of the claim so often made by present-day Socialists, that their movement is a scientific one. The spirit of science does not assail a patiently and thoughtfully constructed theory with mere cheap abuse and vulgar ridicule. Where it doubts it gives its reasons for doubting; and when it meets a candid, scrupulous, and temperate reasoner, it gives him credit for his labor and his temper, even if it dissents from his conclusions. Such a thinker would Malthus be admitted to be by any student of sociology at once honest and judicial in attitude; but never a word of becoming recognition do his great qualities receive from the militant Socialists. Aware as some of them are that Malthus is endorsed by Darwin, they affect to regard his theory as exploded. Prepared as they are to work with clergymen who share their views, they think it tasteful to allude to him as "Parson Malthus", as if the title in his case served to discredit his theories. We who call ourselves Secularists will not be accused of showing too much respect to priests; but I trust we shall never

be guilty of using such *banal* discourtesy to any men who, while holding religious opinions which we reject, have a claim on our respect in the devotion of their lives to humane science and in the tolerant and philosophic cast of their minds.

The treatment of Malthus by Socialists and semi-Socialists of course varies somewhat in tone; and it is only right in this connexion to take note of a recent contribution[1] from the latter school in which, if the acquaintance shown with the subject be inadequate and the spirit unscientific, there is yet an attempt to dispose of Malthusianism by argument instead of by impertinence. The unscientific character of Mr. Wicksteed's method is apparent in the opening sentence of his chapter on Population. "The theory of over-population," he observes, "means, as I take it, that in a given part of the world there are more people than can obtain food and clothing from its surface without an excessive amount of toil"; and he goes on to assume, with professions of a desire to be fair, that Malthusians hold "that as soon as a country does not produce its own food it is over-populated, and the smaller portion it produces the more it is over-populated." Now, this opinion may conceivably be held by persons holding the Malthusian principle; but it forms no part of Malthusianism proper. The law of Malthus—as Mr. Wicksteed knows, for he quotes it—is that "there is a natural tendency and constant effort in population to increase beyond the means of subsistence"; and though Malthus, applying his law to conduct, recommended certain prudential experiments, and Neo-Malthusians to-day suggest expedients they consider better, the law of population remains the law of population, not any set of political suggestions for providing against poverty and misery. Failing to understand this, Mr. Wicksteed proceeds to urge a number of arguments which, while they may tell against the practical politics of some Malthusians, only serve to confuse the issue between him and Malthusianism.

Mr. Wicksteed supposes himself to be arguing against the "population theory" when he proceeds to show that there is poverty in France, where the population increases very slowly; that there is destitution in thinly-populated

[1] "The Land for the People: how to obtain it: how to manage it." By Charles Wicksteed. London: Wm. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.

countries; and that we may have brisk trade in England a few years hence, as we had some years ago, although population continues to increase. If he would only read the "Essay on the Principle of Population", he will find that Malthus was as fully alive to these obvious facts as he is; and that the question goes a great way beyond such preliminary considerations. What Malthus did was to show that in every country and at all periods, among savages and among the civilised, there is a tendency to produce more children than can be reared to manhood; and that it is by such children dying early, from insufficient nurture, or by general disease, or by war, or by famine, or by vice, that population is always kept, as it must always remain, more or less within the margin of subsistence. What Mr. Wicksteed does at best is to show that in any given country, if men in general were wiser than they are, more people might be comfortably supported than are supported *at present*; which very few people will deny. As for his argument from the fluctuations in national prosperity, that only amounts to saying that subsistence varies in abundance—a truth which Malthus took a good deal of pains to illustrate; as he did the correlative truth that when a positive check happens to bring down population considerably below the level of subsistence, the fall is likely to be followed by a rapid increase in propagation. On that point he simply showed that excess ultimately arises, and that such excess is always removed by one cause or another—war, disease, poverty, famine, or emigration. But Malthus never taught, as so many people seem to suppose, that if only population be restrained by preventive checks, poverty is bound to disappear. He was not given to the headlong reasoning of the Socialist and land-nationalising schools of our time; and if he were alive to-day, and were asked why France suffered from a good deal of poverty, he would probably lay his finger on the true explanation, which is that its enormous burden of militarism largely countervails the advantage of a restricted population. With the fact that in England to-day, as Mr. Wicksteed points out, land is being withdrawn from cultivation, he would only be concerned as constituting a datum to be recorded. For him the fact would stand thus: "Under a certain land system, given certain conditions of industry and free trade in foreign corn, land may go out of cultivation. Either such lapse from cultivation reduces the available sub-

sistence of the population or not [Mr. Wicksteed seems to say it does not, asserting that 'we are not suffering from any shortness of food']—either way the tendency to overpopulate remains, and the acute stage of suffering is reached sooner or later as the case may be". If Mr. Wicksteed were searching for scientific truth instead of merely for arguments for land nationalisation (a perfectly proper end in itself), he would see that not one of his facts invalidates the Malthusian law; though they may have cogency as against any fanatical Malthusians who say that no reform in the land laws is needed. To say as he does that "by the Malthusian theory we ought to be getting richer" is simply to quibble very idly over the proposition that as population increases fresh land must be brought into cultivation. Our extra food to-day is got by cultivating land in other countries; and it will hardly be pretended that our population has long been steadily decreasing in proportion to the food obtained.

But besides facts, Mr. Wicksteed offers theories. He "considers that Henry George has shown" the Malthusian theory to be "ridiculously untrue"; and he delivers himself as follows:

> "No matter where we look, as Mr. George has so forcibly shown, we find that it is under-population that we are suffering from. Countries once prosperous and rich with teeming populations are now miserable and poor with scant. Read a lecture given by Mr. Arnold Lupton, M.I.C.E., F.G.S., etc., 'Our Inheritance in the Earth' . . . . where the enormous capacity of our earth is clearly shown. Even with our present knowledge, he shows that the earth could well support 100,000 millions of people, or seventy times its present population."

Note here the spasmodic inconsequence of the argument. Not a single detail is given about the countries alleged to be once prosperous and populous and now poor and bare; and it appears to be assumed that to say the earth *might be made* to support so many more millions amounts to a proof that "it is under-population that we are suffering from". But as Mr. Wicksteed invokes the name of Mr. Henry George, it will be advisable to examine that writer's pretended refutation of Malthusianism. Mr. George, like Mr. Wicksteed, believes in a God whose ineptitude almost attains the sublime by exhausting one's sense of the ridiculous. He is Omnipotent, this God, and he "intended" that men should always hold the land in common; but

human folly has conquered Omnipotence, and God has never been able to get his own way. With this puerile theosophy men like Mr. George and Mr. Wicksteed recommend their land policy to the minds in which theism operates as a fluid keeping all sorts of inconsistencies in solution. Naturally enough, an irrational theory of the universe is accompanied by an uscientific scheme of taxation, in which rent is singled out from every other form of income for appropriation; the man who lives on dividends from consols being unmolested while the landowner is mulcted. But enough for our present study is the reasoning of Mr. George on the law of population. That is a formidably ravelled process.

After admitting that the principle of Malthus "stands in the world of thought as an accepted truth", and that it is incorporated in the Darwinian theory, Mr. George declares that it is "utterly untenable". He begins his argument thus:

"Population always tending to pass the limit of subsistence! How is it, then, that this globe of ours, after all the thousands, and it is now thought millions, of years that man has been upon the earth, is yet so thinly populated?"

If Mr. George has read Malthus' Essay, "which", as he says, "is much oftener spoken of than read," he has found the answer there: "one of the most crushing answers," as it has been put in an economic treatise not strongly Malthusian in its teaching—"one of the most crushing answers that patient and hard-working science has ever given to the reckless assertions of its adversaries". Malthus showed in the most exhaustive detail how population has been checked in all countries and at all times by one or other of the preventive or positive checks of prudence, vice, infanticide, famine, poverty, pestilence, injurious toil, disease, and war. Mr. George, admitting that there has been plenty of misery in the world, announces that in every case it has arisen "either from *unsocial ignorance* and rapacity, or from bad government, unjust laws, or destructive warfare". Now, to use such language by way of discrediting Malthus is only to show incompetence to gather Malthus' meaning. No man ever did more to show how "unsocial ignorance" hindered human well-being: the very object of his treatise was to dispel such ignorance. But Mr. George in the very same chapter (Book II., ch. ii.), after

admitting that "unsocial ignorance" may produce misery, goes on to declare that "nowhere can want be properly attributed to the pressure of population against the power to procure subsistence *in the then existing degree of human knowledge*". Here, besides the self-contradiction, we have one of Mr. George's main fallacies in a nutshell. He virtually tells us that when the savages of the Andaman islands died for lack of the shell-fish they usually picked up by the sea, it was their own fault, because they knew how precarious were these supplies, and they ought to have accumulated other stores of food; that when the Digger Indians live on grasshoppers, and the aboriginal Australians on the worms they get in rotten wood, they are not making proper use of their knowledge. What is to be said of a writer who sociologises in this fashion? He asks us to believe that the savage "knows" how to get better food if he only would; and dies out of obstinacy. What is the meaning of such a doctrine? Any ordinary mind, unpossessed by a pre-conceived theory, will admit that it is idle to the last degree; but it is not more idle than Mr. George's teaching that men and women ought to propagate freely to-day because more food might be produced if only the majority of men were wiser. His thesis is that "in the existing state of knowledge"—that is, of some people's knowledge—it is certain that the amount of food produced might be increased. But what does such an assertion practically amount to? What is the immediate effect of a "knowledge" which the majority have not acquired? Are we to bring children into the world for premature death because we "know" that the land "could" yield more food, if only it were nationalised—while we also know that it will nevertheless not be nationalised for some time to come? Mr. George is not a very clear-headed thinker, and he may not see that his book tends to convey such a precept; but such is the fact. And equally certain is it that his implied denial of the helplessness of starved savages involves an extremely repulsive form of Calvinism.

If the above imputation on Mr. George's clearness of perception be demurred to, let the further steps in his criticism of Malthus be taken as a test. After an untrustworthy, and in any case irrelevant, set of assertions as to the populousness of ancient nations, he deliberately advances as an argument against the law of population the

fact that only in recent times has it been formulated. How is it, he asks, that the more civilised peoples of the world have never recognised or admitted this law down to our own time, but on the contrary have always encouraged propagation? It is difficult to deal respectfully with such a question. Would Mr. George allege that the fact that almost the whole of mankind before Galileo held the earth to be flat, is a reason for doubting that the earth is round? What is the purpose of his reference to the "wisdom of the centuries" if it is not a catchpenny appeal to popular ignorance? It may or may not be the outcome of intellectual confusion on his part, but as to his next argument there can be no doubt. "If the tendency to reproduce", he asks, "be so strong as Malthusianism supposes, how is it that families so often become extinct—families in which want is unknown?" And he goes on to argue that "on the presumption that population tends to double every twenty-five years", the descendants of Confucius ought, in 2,150 years after Confucius' death, to have amounted to 859, 559, 193, 106, 709, 670, 198, 710, 528 souls; whereas in fact they only numbered some 22,000. It is depressing to think that such an exhibition of childish folly can have impressed anybody as an argument. Does Mr. George, or does he not, understand the meaning of the words "tends to"? It would really seem not. Setting aside the case of the descendants of Confucius—which simply serves further to confuse the issue, for Malthus never pretended to say what would ultimately happen to a family "enjoying peculiar privileges and consideration" in China or anywhere else—the Malthusian assertion in regard to China may be thus set forth, for the benefit of Mr. George's admirers:—The *tendency* there, as everywhere else, has been to produce children beyond the available subsistence; and the superfluous population produced under the operation of this law has simply been perpetually cropped off by disease, poverty, famine, war, and infanticide; while vice has to a large extent kept the tendency in check. Does Mr. George pretend even to say that the descendants of Confucius have not lessened or thwarted their reproductive powers by vicious practices? It matters not to the argument whether their failure to attain greater numbers result from vice or the enervation of luxury, or whether their particular stock happened to be comparatively infecund—the fact remains that not only is the tendency of population to double itself

under favourable conditions in twenty-five years; but it has actually been known to do so, *as Mr. George himself admits*. His Confucian figures are mere dust for his readers' eyes.

After this achievement, Mr. George goes on to argue in detail that in every thickly-populated country where people are chronically miserable, it is not because there are too many of them, but because they might have provided better for themselves if they had been wiser—the old barren formula which nobody ever denied. Mr. George apparently cannot realise that the question in hand is whether or not there were too many people for the food they did produce; and just as little, apparently, can he apprehend the Malthusian argument that, supposing the people of any country at any time had used ever so much better means of producing food, and had good laws, they would on that very account have multiplied to the point of disaster the more rapidly, unless they deliberately practised parental prudence, or impaired their generative powers by vice. A historical case founded on by Mr. George will make the issue clear. He points out that in Ireland, during the great famine, food continued to be exported to pay rent; and he alleges that

"Had this food been left to those who raised it; had the cultivators of the soil been permitted to retain and use the capital their labor produced; had security stimulated industry and permitted the adoption of economical methods, there would have been enough to support in bounteous comfort the largest population Ireland ever had, and the potato blight might have come and gone without stinting a single human being of a full meal."

Now, the Malthusian contradiction to that piece of wild optimism is simply this, that the Irish people had populated up to the limit of the subsistence left them after paying their rents; that, if they had owned their own land without having learned to check their child-bearing, they would have populated up to the full limit of subsistence permitted them by the land; and that when the famine came there would just have been so many millions more to die. Observe, it is not asserted that the Irish people *would* have been so recklessly prolific if they had been their own landlords. Mill, who was a convinced Malthusian, held that property was one of the strongest factors in making people prudent in the matter of their families. But such prudence

is action in recognition of the law of population, not a disproof of it. It is the triumph of Malthusianism.

Mr. George, however, not only denies that population has ever exceeded the available means of subsistence: he explicitly declares that "in any given state of civilisation a greater number of people can collectively be provided for than a smaller", and that "in a state of equality the natural increase of population would constantly tend to make every individual richer instead of poorer". Yet, just before, he has declared that "the tendency to increase . . . . weakens just as the higher development of the individual becomes possible and the perpetuity of the race is assured"; and this tendency he represents as a "beautiful adaptation". So that, on Mr. George's contention, it is a "beautiful adaptation" that the human race tends to fall off in its rate of increase just at the time when its rapid increase begins to be entirely advantageous! Such are the arrangements of Mr. George's "All-Wise and All-Beneficent". But he finds support for both of these propositions among Socialists who are not given to predicating a paternal Providence—whose optimism rather takes the shape of the assumption that only the selfishness of certain classes stands between humanity and unmitigated well-being. Of these Socialists not a few practice the Neo-Malthusian principle which they dishonestly disown: and it becomes every day more important to examine the morality and the tendency of their policy—to see what evidence there is either for the view that as social improvement is promoted, the rate of increase of population will decline to just the right extent without any volition on the part of the part of the people —for that is the argument; or for the belief that under improved social arrangements any increase of population can be comfortably sustained. Mr. George asserts both of these things, and the random and reckless utterances of many Socialists imply both propositions likewise. Let us see what basis there is for either one or the other. Mr. George supplies none. We have simply his word for the "beautiful adaptation"; and when he professes to "submit to the test of facts" his allegation that the denser population is, the more easily it can support itself, he merely cites a quantity of evidence to show that in the most densely populated countries there are found the greatest accumulations of wealth—a statement which is entirely beside the case; and which, besides, is countered by his own conten-

tion that in these very countries is also found the greatest poverty. His demonstration simply resolves itself as usual into the protest that men "might" have unlimited food if they would only act more wisely; and such a thesis cannot be sustained by reference to the facts of past history, unless the ideal be shown to have been at some period realised. That of course cannot be shown, and we must fall back on the purely deductive argument of the Socialists —their contention as to what might be accomplished if we adopted Socialism.

In a vindication of Malthusianism against the attacks of Socialists, it is hardly necessary to show that nationalisation of the land cannot abolish poverty. That is asserted by the Socialists against the land-nationalisers. We have rather to consider whether a resort to Socialism would abolish poverty without recourse being had to parental prudence. The Socialists applaud Mr. George's quasi-refutation of Malthus, but tell him all the same that his own principle of land nationalisation is of little more value than that of population. They alone have the cure. Now, it is not easy to say what are the practical proposals of Socialists, seeing that they almost entirely confine themselves to generalities; but for the purposes of this discussion it may be set down that there are two methods by which they propose to apportion the means of subsistence among the workers when all the means of production have been nationalised. One is the payment of what is considered a just wage to the workers individually; the other is the simple bestowal upon each individual of an equal or adequate share in all means of subsistence, education, and enjoyment. By the first method each worker would have to devote his or her wage to the rearing of his or her children while they are too young to support themselves. It is clear as noonday, then, that if under Socialism of this description men and women have large families they will set up serious inequalities of comfort. If Jack and Jill have half a dozen children while Tom the bachelor has none, they will clearly be poor relatively to Tom, who can earn as much wages as Jack, if not more; and if Dick has two children they will be better provided for than Jack's six. If Socialism is ever realised there will probably be payment of wages in the first stage; and we should thus have under a Socialist *régime* poverty and comfort as before. For if the average wage be enough to keep a family of

six in complete comfort, it clearly cannot do as much for a family of twelve.

If, however, we assume an equal division of all means of subsistence, &c., or the apportionment to each "according to his needs", the position of the fecund parents and their children will be no worse than that of the prudent or the sterile. But will the prudent and the infecund be content to bear the burden of the philoprogenitiveness of their fellows? Whatever may be thought as to the possibility of increasing the food supply, children are clearly a burden. Is it supposed that in the Socialist state the majority will be indifferent to the selfishness of those who blindly gratify their propensities at the expense of adding to the burdens of the whole? I can conceive no plausible answer to this question save that which falls back on the vague theory—the urging of which is a virtual admission that there has been over-population in the past—that as civilisation progresses fecundity spontaneously diminishes to the requisite extent. What then are the evidences for that? Nothing beyond the fact that under-fed people and animals are frequently more prolific than the well-fed and the over-fed; and the physiological reasons we have for believing that when men and women become purely brain-workers their sexual vigor declines. There is no reason whatever to suppose that healthy working people will for ages to come be incapable of having large families. Many of the loose data on which Socialists so hastily found are really testimonies to the spread of that parental prudence which Malthusians inculcate.

For instance, Mr. Laurence Gronlund, who tells us that Mr. George has "laid bare the utter absurdity of the Malthusian philosophy", gives us the following precious proof that population tends to go all right of its own accord:—"In the beginning of this century families with from ten to fifteen children each were not rare in New England; *now one with more than six is found only among the poor.*" And Mr. Gronlund believes that this is a cosmic pre-adjustment, resting on the nature of things! Is he so ill-informed on the subject on which he writes as not to be aware that parental prudence is deliberately and extensively practised in New England; that women there are very cautious about becoming mothers; and that there have been protests that the native stock is falling off

through too great reluctance to propagate? The truth is that, on the one hand, the lessons of Neo-Malthusianism are being widely learned in civilised countries; and that, on the other, women as they gain knowledge and status grow averse to making themselves the mere child-breeders they so commonly were in the past. They see that the old saws about olive branches and replenishing the earth and trusting in Providence have only served to keep them in a state of subjection and domestic martyrdom; and they desire to be something more than overworked nurses during the best part of their lives. And all men who desire to see women cultured and intelligent sympathise with them heartily. But while the more thoughtful men and women are thus practising parental prudence and deliberately limiting their families, sciolists and Socialists actually point to the results of their prudence as showing that no prudence is necessary, and tell the imprudent and the thoughtless among the working classes that they need have no scruple about propagating in the freest fashion—that when they get good wages their fecundity will diminish to precisely the right point! Such advice may be the outcome of delusion; but it is none the less pernicious; and the delusion assuredly does small credit to the intelligence of those who cherish it.

The broad facts of organic life on the earth are patent enough. Even Mr. George can see that vegetable life and the lower animal life beat "wastefully" against their barriers; and Tennyson has sung for theists of Nature "red in tooth and claw", wasting millions of lives to preserve a type, and yet letting even types go. Emerson has told them that all appetites are in excess. Every naturalist knows that plants bear seed a thousandfold in excess of the possibilities of their spreading; that the life of insects and fish rests on the constant waste of myriads of organisms; that birds perish by the thousand in cold seasons; that whole strata of fish are found killed by catastrophe; that beasts die off like flies from drought and famine and murrain; but the Georgian theist, whose "All-Wise and All-Beneficent" arranged all this, believes that the moment you rise in the animal scale to man, everything is for the best; that *his* appetites need never be restrained; that his food can never fail him; that he can always see the right thing to do; and that his miseries are simply the result of his deliberate refusal to do what he knows he

ought. And Socialists who have seen reason to eliminate Providence from their scheme of life are not ashamed to join him in a fatuous pæan on the beneficent nature of things—in which every prospect pleases, and only the capitalist is vile! How plausible! how probable! how scientific!

It is time there should be a plain exposure of the evil tendency—be it the outcome of folly or of a nefarious policy—inhering in these Socialist utterances on the law of population. Unhappily one cannot be sure that some agitators are not desirous of keeping up the pressure of over-population and misery in order to facilitate revolution; but there is no room for doubt as to the irrationality which such an aim—supposing it to exist—is promoted by the sentimentalists. Let a Malthusian advise workers to keep their families small, and straightway some Socialist shrieks that the adviser is seeking to rob them of the one solace they had left—as if any good-hearted or sane workman could find pleasure in seeing around him a swarm of poorly clad and poorly fed children, presumably destined to a life of hardship like his own. Of course it is the men who talk so. The Socialist father—to judge by his utterances—is as far as the worst Philistine from proposing to restrict the animal and menial sphere of his wife's duties. She is to go on supplying him with "solace" year after year, going through her eternal round of cooking, washing, mending, cleaning; passing periodically through long spells of weakness and pain; while her helpmeet, in his increased leisure, considers the present and future condition of Socialism. Doubtless many Socialists sincerely desire the bettering of the lot of women; and Dr. Bebel has written a book with that object; but as has been pointed out by Mrs. Besant, he denounces Malthusianism while by implication he is committed to profiting by its lessons. It is for the Socialists to reconcile their professed championship of women with their repudiation of every suggestion for the alleviation of women's domestic burdens.

As for the Georgian chimæra of "the more hands the more food", that may perhaps be left to the common-sense of all who know anything of the processes of agriculture. It is mere impudent nonsense to say that the soil in cultivation can be made to go on doubling its yield as fast as unchecked population doubles. All Mr. George's mock illustrations assume the premature dying-off of a large

proportion of the children of the poor, and what Malthusians urge is that these children need never have been born. The scientific Malthusian's message to the workers is clear, consistent, and perfectly sympathetic. He tells them that they share with every other species of organism the tendency to produce superfluous offspring; and that they can only avoid the evil results of this tendency by applying to their parental action the caution and foresight they have to apply to every other department of conduct, and which animals for the most part lack. He points out that by propagating recklessly they not only impoverish themselves, and injure the children they produce, but flood the labor market and perpetuate the miseries of their class. As a Malthusian he does not tell them not to aim at political and social reform; if he carries his scientific method into his politics, he urges them to combine for the reduction and proper apportionment of national burdens, and for the restriction of idle living on the general industry. He does not, as a Malthusian, seek to turn them against Socialism: but he teaches, as Mill taught, that Socialism must positively involve methodical restriction of propagation; while, as some of the really philosophic Socialists hold, it is likely to ultimately involve the most scrupulous selective care in the process. The empirical Socialist ignores the wisdom of his teachers.

One thing more. The worker may sometimes hear it said that pressure of population is necessary to progress. Let him reflect what this means—that his class is to suffer in order that invention and the arts may flourish. And this doctrine he will find half-implied in the teaching of some Socialists, as in this remark of Mr. Gronlund: "If the smart fellows of the Stone Age had been Malthusians and had been able to prevent increase of population beyond the supply of the then existing *caves*, we should never have had brown-stone-fronts or architects." If that sentence—which is certainly irrelevant to its context—has any meaning in regard to present policy, it is that by keeping up the friction and misery of superfluous population we shall secure thoroughgoing reform faster. Let true-hearted workers say whether they will endorse such a doctrine of progress by bringing children into a life of misery and making their wives bear the worst of the burden.

THE

BLUNDERS OF FAITH.

AN ANSWER TO

"THE DIFFICULTIES OF INFIDELITY".

BY

SCOTULUS.

"MR. PARKER
MADE THAT DARKER
WHICH WAS DARK ENOUGH WITHOUT."

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY A. AND H. BRADLAUGH BONNER,
AND
SOLD BY R. FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER ST., E.C.
1891.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY A. BONNER, 34 BOUVERIE STREET,
FLEET STREET, E.C.

THE BLUNDERS OF FAITH.

An Answer to "The Difficulties of Infidelity".

I.

Among the many discourses written in defence of the Christian faith during the last few years, one set have been put before the Scottish public with a flourish of trumpets which challenges special attention from those *at* whom they are written, that is to say, the "Infidels". I refer to a series of printed lectures entitled "The Difficulties of Infidelity", by the Rev. John Parker, Minister of Cleland. Speaking on some knowledge of orthodox polemics, I should have been disposed to say of the first two pamphlets of this series, which lie before me, that they were a very ordinary re-statement of the most familiar arguments on the side of "revealed religion", by a clergyman of the ordinary type, going a little beyond the average perhaps in the matter of sourness, but in nothing else. Certain leading religious men, however, have testified to Mr. Parker their very high opinion of his performances, or at least of the first in the series, and have virtually accepted him as an exponent of the Christian case against modern Rationalism.

The first sponsor cited by Mr. Parker is the Duke of Argyll. It is not clear, however, that he is entitled to make the use he does of the name of that authority. In the series of recommendatory extracts which he prefixes to his *first* pamphlet, the Duke of Argyll is represented as writing :—

"Such lectures *as you refer to*, may be, and ought to be, one of the most effective agencies for upholding the Truth among the people. . . . ."

In the *second* pamphlet, the extract begins thus:—

"*Such lectures* ought to be one of the most effective agencies for upholding the Truth among the people. . . . ."

The italics are mine. In the second case, it will be observed, the Duke's words are made to apply to Mr. Parker's lectures, while the original remark seems to have referred to some others. That, however, is a matter for the Duke and Mr. Parker to settle between them: I simply draw the attention of orthodox readers to the circumstances. About the other testimonials there seems to be no ambiguity. The Rev. Dr. Flint, Professor of Divinity in Edinburgh University, writes:

"The lecture [*i.e.*, the first] is able and most opportune. A volume of such lectures cannot need any recommendation except what it carries in itself."

The Rev. Dr. Gray, Moderator of Assembly, writes:

"I have read your first lecture on the Difficulties connected with Infidelity with pleasure and, I trust, with profit. . . . . Altogether, I have been struck with your acquaintance with modern thought in connexion with this subject . . . ."

Principal Fairbairn, D.D., of Mansfield College, Oxford, a representative English Nonconformist, assures Mr. Parker:

"Your design seems to me excellent, and the lecture admirable for its purpose. The difficulties are well stated, and much of the criticism is incisive and to the point."

And the Venerable Archdeacon Farrar, who represents the Liberal wing of the Church of England, says:

"Have read with much pleasure your lecture on Infidelity, and I think it may do good if placed in the right hands."

We are dealing, then, with a widely authorised defence of Christianity, one approved and accepted by men of high standing in the leading Protestant Churches. Let us see what it is worth.

II.

The position maintained by Mr. Parker in his first lecture is thus stated:

"The professors of Revealed Religion believe in a Supreme Being, 'Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth'. They believe that He is our Creator, our Father, and our Judge; that we are made in his image, and are able to enter into communion with Him, and to learn to do His will."

By Revealed Religion Mr. Parker evidently means the Christian religion: he does not admit that Mohammedanism, for instance, is "revealed", though its adherents make the same claim for their faith as he does for his. But, speaking of his Deity, he says:

"All religions recognise more or less distinctly His existence. There is reason to believe that all religions were at one time alike, and consisted of a few simple but profound doctrines concerning God . . . . Both in the Bible and in all the known religions of antiquity, we find evidences of an original and universal belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, and who can say that such a belief is absurd or irrational."

The statement here made as to what "there is reason to believe" about primeval religion is the statement either of an ill-read man or of an uncandid one. So overwhelming is the evidence against the theory of an original monotheism, that even in this country, where theology still perverts science to a considerable degree, there is no anthropologist of the least standing who now takes the old view. Last century, David Hume, with the insight of genius, reasoned that polytheism must have flourished first; and to-day the writings of such men as Tylor, Spencer, Lubbock, and Lang—the last not at all unfriendly to orthodoxy—support his doctrine with an immense mass of evidence. Of course if a man believes the Bible to be "God's Truth" he will believe what it says about the origin of religion. But even in the churches, the great majority of educated men have ceased to believe that the compilers of the Bible had any true knowledge of the origin of humanity. Science teaches with more and more confidence that men rose from lower forms. Then their religion rose from low forms also.

When Mr. Parker comes to support his view by argument he falls into the old ruts of the young men's debating societies. "To the unsophisticated mind," he says, "the denial of the existence of a Creator seems utterly absurd." But to the unsophisticated mind it seems utterly absurd to say that the earth is a round ball, whirling on its axis and sweeping round the sun; and the men who a few hundred

years ago taught in Christendom this truth, which had been discovered by ancient Pagans and lost again, were almost in danger of their lives. And if Mr. Parker had lived in Luther's time, I make no doubt that, like Luther, he would have denounced the Copernican theory. His reliance on the "unsophisticated mind" is noteworthy, on the part of a man who professes a religion that to the "unsophisticated minds" of the greater part of the human race is untrue. And what has the unsophisticated mind to say of Three Gods who are One, and of an Eternal Son who was born of a virgin mother? Mr. Parker may tell us that millions of extremely ignorant people have believed it. True. But that was because they were afraid to have an opinion of their own, being told that if they did not believe they would be damned, or because they were trained in the absurd belief from their cradles, or passed from one ignorant and absurd belief to another.

Mr. Parker argues on the good old lines, that though the sun dazzles the eye, that does not disprove the sun; and so "the mysteries of the divine nature do not disprove the existence of God". Then, seeing into what a trap this leads him, he makes the usual attempt to deliver himself:

> "But the Atheist is in the position of a man who should deny the existence of the sun, either because he was blind from birth, or had become blind by gazing at its brightness, or because he wilfully shut his eyes and refused to look at it."

Here we have three explanations of Atheism. Let us take the first. If Atheists are born blind to a truth which is plain to other people, what becomes of the justice and goodness and fatherhood of Mr. Parker's God, who has denied them the power of mental vision? And if Atheists are thus incurably blind, why does Mr. Parker argue with them and denounce them, as we shall see he does later? If you found a blind man who denied that there was a sun, would you jeer at him? Would you even think there was any use in arguing with him? But it happens that even men born physically blind never dispute that there are others who have an advantage over them. How is it that Atheists cannot acquire a similar notion? If they cannot, must it not be, on Mr. Parker's theory, because the omnipotent Creator so willed it? But Mr.

Parker thinks we may become mentally blind by gazing on the mystery. Then again, that must be, on his own principles, because God so willed it. Mr. Parker, who needs a great many shifts to save himself, may here resort to his next, that the Atheist may have "wilfully shut his eyes". But suppose I say the same thing of Mr. Parker? Argument aims at persuasion; and he apparently supposes he can persuade Atheists by telling them they cannot or will not see. I am not going to meet idle insolence with more idle insolence. I am not going to tell Mr. Parker that he is either born stupid, or has addled his head with problems which are too deep for him, or that he is wilfully closing his eyes to the glaring absurdities of his creed. But I appeal to his orthodox readers to reflect on his manner of reasoning, which I should be exactly copying if I said these things of him. The question is, what kind of reasoning tends to persuade open-minded people. I prefer to suppose that Mr. Parker, like myself and most of his countrymen, was brought up in devout Christian belief, as Moslems are brought up in Mohammedanism; and that his career and culture were such as to fix him in his early beliefs. I have no great hope that, at his time of life, he will grow out of these beliefs, of the irrationality of which I am now convinced; but I am pretty sure that some of his readers will. It is for them I write.

III.

When Mr. Parker has settled that the Atheist is either blind or dishonest, he proceeds to set forth "some of the difficulties of the Atheist":

"(1) The first question we are naturally inclined to put is the very simple but quite rational one, *How do you know?* John Foster made good use of this argument. He said an Atheist would require to visit every corner of the universe; for if it be true that there is no proof of the existence of a God in this world, there may be in other worlds. To be able validly and authoritatively to deny the existence of God, the Atheist would require to be omniscient and omnipresent."

Now, see the effect of Mr. Parker's argument on his own position. He is a Christian, and he believes his is the only true God. He does not believe in the existence of

Jupiter, or Juno, or Osiris, or Isis, or Venus, or Baal, or Asshur, or Odin, or Brahma, or Krishna, or Kali, or Mars, or any of the tens of thousands of Gods and Goddesses in whom millions of men have believed. He says all these are delusions. He does not believe there is any Goddess who bore God-children. Then, *How does he know?* Is he omniscient and omnipresent? Has he visited every corner of the universe, so as to know that there is no Isis or Osiris, or Krishna, or Huitzlipochtli, or Jupiter, or Pluto? He thinks himself free to deny that any of these alleged Gods and Goddesses exists. He denies ten thousand Gods. Then am I not just as well entitled to deny ten thousand and one—to deny *his* delusion as well as the rest? His argument has not a leg to stand upon. And what are we to say when men like Dr. Flint and Archdeacon Farrar endorse such a piece of reasoning? Are they incapable of seeing that the John-Foster argument cuts the ground from under its own feet? We must suppose so; we cannot suppose them dishonest. And these are the accredited and trained representatives of the prevailing religion of the country!

The John-Foster argument is a poor sophism. Every man rejects some ancient beliefs—beliefs in centaurs, flying horses, spirits of fountains, river-gods, or demons. We argue that these beliefs can be sufficiently shown to have arisen out of *ignorant guessing* or loose imagination. Knowing how the human mind works, we set aside hundreds of such beliefs, and we never dispute each other's right to do so. All Christians reject the special beliefs of other creeds. And what the Atheist does is just to tell the Christian that *his* God is a mere human imagination like the rest, a growth out of older beliefs, gradually modified and thinned out, till it is in many ways different from the older notions, but still *an ignorant guess.* We want proof before we believe: we do not believe merely because a thing is said. It is the Christian who would need to go all through the universe before he could produce any plausible ground for our believing that *his* notion was right and all the thousands of other and older notions wrong. The Atheist does not say "There is no God": that is too loose a phrase for logical philosophy, though it may pass in ordinary talk. We do not say, "There is no Jabberwok," or "There is

no Humpty Dumpty". We say these are *meaningless terms*. So the Atheist says either that "God" is a meaningless term or that it denotes a baseless fancy, like "Puck" and "Neptune" and "Pluto". And we come to the conclusion in the three cases on exactly the same logical principles.

IV.

From one self-destroying argument Mr. Parker proceeds to another. He tells the old story of Napoleon pointing to the stars and asking, "Gentlemen, Who made all these?" This, says Mr. Parker, "is an old and most cogent reply. In Paley's *Evidences* it is worked out with great skill and completeness." And still, somehow, philosophers are not convinced, and even religious people find Paley, not to speak of Napoleon, a little unsatisfactory. Let us see whether Mr. Parker fares any better. The gist of his argument lies in these two paragraphs:

"The Atheist, ... in denying the existence of God is committed to one of two propositions—*The Universe is Uncaused*, or *The Universe is Eternal*—it has always existed as it does now. Now the first proposition is *Unthinkable*. Try to imagine an *uncaused* effect or phænomenon and you will find you are attempting an impossibility . . . .

"If you say the Universe had no First Cause you assert what is *unthinkable*. If you say it is External and Existent (*sic*) you are either a Pantheist—which you deny being—or *you must be an Eternal Being yourself*. For upon what grounds can you assure us that the Universe existed from eternity? You have no reason for it in the nature of things. You cannot have a Revelation concerning it, for you do not believe in a Revealing God. And you don't pretend you were there to see. Don't you think some of the *asinine* atoms must by mistake have got mixed up with those of your own brain?"

Observe the good taste of the last stroke of argument; and observe that neither the Duke of Argyll nor Professor Flint nor Dr. Gray nor Principal Fairbairn nor Archdeacon Farrar has a word of rebuke for the Christian champion who in controversy tells his opponents that they must be asses. Thus is God justified of his children; and though there is one Bible text about the danger of calling your brother a fool, Mr. Parker is able to cite another: "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God". The reader

will remember the high moral and intellectual authority of the author cited.

But let us return to business. Mr. Parker, after using an argument which reduced his God-idea to the level of every other God-idea, uses another which, on his own principles, reduces his God to nullity. He chooses to describe the Universe as "an effect or phænomenon", and then decides that as such it must have a cause. The cause, in his opinion, is God. But if the Universe, which means just Everything, is to be viewed as an effect or phænomenon, so, clearly, must God be, even if we follow Mr. Parker in positing the absurdity that God is something over and above Everything. An Eternal Universe, says Mr. Parker, is unthinkable. Then what about an Eternal God? This, we may tell Mr. Parker, is another "old and most cogent reply"—too cogent for his professional capacity. It never has been met by Theists, and it never will be. In the Sunday School story of the pious maiden who refutes the Infidel by asking whether the hen or the egg came first, it appears that the pious intelligence thinks the uncaused existence of an Omnipotent Male Person a perfectly simple matter, but the uncaused existence of a hen or an egg a monstrosity. And that is the position of Mr. Parker.

See what his position comes to in thought. At a certain time in the past, "there was no Universe: there was nothing—but God". This God was Infinite. There was no matter—only an Infinitude of Vacuity. But the Infinite God, dwelling in Infinite Nothing, proceeded to make another Infinite—for that the stellar Universe is Infinite is a necessary belief. So that Infinite is not Infinite. But God was also Unchangeable: yet after an eternity of non-creation he suddenly proceeded to create an Infinity. Now, if we are to talk of Infinites at all, we must be true to the logic of our terms, and note that *to create an Infinite Universe must take Infinite Time*. So that there is (on Mr. Parker's principles) no Universe, and there never will be! To this series of murderous contradictions does his doctrine come.

It will not do for Mr. Parker to fall back on the verbal formula that his God is Self-Existent. He has shut that door against himself. In his own words, to say so he "must either be a Pantheist—which he denies being—or *he must be an Eternal Being himself*". He stultifies himself

yet again:—"If you say that Matter is Eternal . . . . we have to ask the old childish question, How do you know? Are you Eternal?" The question is indeed childish: it is suicidal. But if Mr. Parker will ask childish questions he must take the consequences. He has argued himself down, and nobody else. On his own principles, it is folly to say that God is Eternal. "How does Mr. Parker know? Is he Eternal?" He *would* have it so.

Mr. Parker does indeed catch a glimpse of the process of chronic logical suicide he is carrying on, and suggests (if I understand him aright) that where there is Intelligence there may be Self-Existence—that is, uncaused Existence. But this is only adding another to the "twenty mortal murders" which Mr. Parker performs on his own argument. If the Intelligent may be Self-Existent, man may be Self-Existent. He is not. But man or animal is the only form in which Mr. Parker knows Intelligence; and he is positing as an attribute of Infinity one of the attributes of finite organism. Nothing could be more profoundly absurd. The very nature of Intelligence implies limitation—a mere knowing of phænomena by their differences. To say that God is an Infinite Intelligence is about as wise as to say he has infinitely long legs. It is making God in man's image, and then, so to speak, blowing him out. As the Greek of old said, the animals, if they followed men's theological methods, would make Gods in the shape of animals: a dog would endow him with Infinite Sense of Smell and a hare with Infinite Fleetness. These are meaningless expressions. So is Infinite Intelligence. Mr. Parker approvingly quotes the Hebrew Psalmist, "He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" The Hebrew Psalmist and Mr. Parker are a precious pair of authorities on folly. Shall we next say: He that formed the teeth shall he not chew? He that formed the stomach, shall he not digest? He that formed the—enough. Here is God made in man's image, with a vengeance!

V.

Mr. Parker enters into a futile analysis of the relative truths of positive science, and repeats the old sophistries about the impossibility of natural correlations existing by

accident. These are the expressions of men who do not comprehend the issue they raise. The word "accident" has *no meaning* in regard to the processes of the Universe. It is a term that only expresses the limitations of men's power and knowledge. The Universe being Infinite and Eternal (I shall justify this position in a moment) its attributes are simply the modes under which we cognize it; and to say that any single cognized relation—as, Color and Eye—implies "Design", is just to repeat the blunder about Infinite Intelligence. Design is a term expressing human calculation. Logically, it is idle to select any one correlation and fasten "Design" on that. Instead of taking Color and Eye, suppose we take Belief and Unbelief, Mr. Parker's polemic and my answer. If the Universe be designed, these must both be designed. Sin and disease and cruelty and death must be designed; and Mr. Parker can only escape by the fresh suicide of declaring, as does his Bible, that Infinite God's first design was overruled by man's perversity. Let me add that while Mr. Parker and his backers hold by the old Design argument, many Christian writers have given it up as a weapon which cuts him who uses it. (See "Final Causes", by W. M. W. Call (Kegan Paul and Trübner) pp. 37-8, 152. This work will yield the student a broom for every theistic cob-web spun by Mr. Parker).

I have said that we must suppose the Universe Infinite and Eternal. It is a quibble to answer, as some do, that we cannot *think* Eternal Existence. The word "unthinkable" is loosely applied to two sorts of mental difficulty. We "cannot think" Infinite Extension, because our powers of perception are finite. But we "cannot think" stoppage of extension, because that is flat nonsense, like affirming two hills with no valley between. Our thought, as it were, goes out among the stars—on, and on, and on, till we cease conceiving. *That* is our limit. But if we try to imagine an end to extension we fall into flat contradiction. The ending would necessarily be something solid, and *that* must either extend on, or there is more "Space", as we call it, beyond. The two "unthinkables" are in very different categories. One we cannot rationally admit: the other we must; and there an end.

We assume the Universe to be Infinite because of this

necessity of thought. What we call Space is just an alternation of impalpable Existence, or less palpable Existence than what we call Matter or Solidity. "Matter," to the Atheist, does not mean (unless for particular purposes, when the definition is agreed on) "that which we can touch, see, and weigh". In the philosophical sense, what we usually call Matter is just a Mode of Existence. And when Mr. Parker argues that Matter cannot give rise to Thought he is beating the air. The Atheist says that the Infinite Universe (Existence) includes the potentialities of all phænomena. It is not a case of rock, or water, or organism coming first, and brain and Thought coming later. Rock and brain, Heat and Thought, are alike modes of Infinite Existence, of the Universe, and neither "makes" or "gives rise to" the other, though they condition each other. Each is but a phase of the Infinite Whole, whose mechanism we can only trace here and there in the form of correlations. Much has been said of the presumption of Atheism. It is Theism that is presumptuous. The Atheist does not foolishly pretend to measure the immeasurable and analyse the Infinite. It is the Theist who plans it all out in terms of his own peddling Intelligence, endowing Infinity with eyes, nose, and *sex*.

Mr. Parker may say that the position I am taking up is Pantheistic. I reply, as has often been done before, that *consistent* Pantheism is just Atheism: that is to say, the Pantheist merely calls the Universe *God*, while admitting that the latter word cannot now carry its old meanings. That being so, we say it is better to drop the word and avoid confusion; and this plea I have never seen met; the reason being, I suppose, that when the professed Pantheist reaches consistency he either *does* drop the term "Theos" or "God", or relapses into inconsistency.

VI.

It is after losing himself, in the usual way, in the metaphysics of Theism, that Mr. Parker resorts to the equally usual tactic of contending that Atheism incapacitates men for action. I have seen much of orthodox argumentation, but I confess to a certain fresh sense of entertainment at

seeing Mr. Parker fall into the old ditches one after the other, cutting away time after time the branch on which he sits. After twenty-four pages of argument against Atheism, he writes:

"That a belief in Atheism would paralyse all beneficent effort and lead men to live only for the passing moment, is . . . . incontrovertible."

Then why all this floundering argument? Either we Atheists, so-called, "believe" our Atheism, or we don't. If we don't, to argue with us is simple imbecility. If we do, Mr. Parker says, we "live only for the passing moment". Then how on earth is he going to convert us? Not to put too fine a point upon it, his dialectic is silly. But it is worse—it is sillily slanderous.

A great Atheist lately died, after politically triumphing over the pious hostility of half the Christian population of this country, who had hated him as only devout Christians and Theists can hate. Either Charles Bradlaugh was a sincere Atheist or he was not. If he was not, he must have been a suicidal dissembler indeed, for all his ambitions were thwarted by the obstacles his Atheism set up against him. Who will pretend then that he was insincere? Will Mr. Parker? But if he was not insincere, what comes of the pretence that Atheism paralyses all beneficent effort? Did *he* only "live for the passing moment"? Did he not wear out his life in toil for the public good, dying poor and burdened with debt, where if he had sought only wealth and comfort his powers could have won him a fortune?

Mr. Parker argues—he would call it arguing, I suppose—that Theism makes a man more zealous against Evil than an Atheist can be, who thinks that "Evil has as much right (!) to exist as Goodness has", while Theists "all feel that Evil is being overcome of Good". One more collapse of Mr. Parker's logic! His God "designed" all things, and therefore, on his own showing, introduced Evil only in order gradually to overcome his own work. And this conception of an arbitrarily Evil-working God, forsooth, is to be an encouragement! Plainly, it is the Theist who, if he were logical (which happily is impossible for him), would not dare to resist Evil, because he would thereby be resisting God. The Atheist has no such bugbear. To seek Good and hinder Evil is the law of his existence. The Evil is just *Evil to him*, felt egoistically or

sympathetically. It is one of Mr. Parker's innumerable blunders to say that Atheism "implies that we live under the control of a remorseless Fate". For the Atheist, Fate has no other meaning than *That which happens*; so he is part of Fate. "Remorseless Fate" has thus no more meaning than "happy triangle" or "despondent thunderstorm". But, once more, what about Mr. Parker's God, the God of Hell and Vengeance, who created men to do evil, and damns them for it to all eternity? Go to Mr. Parker's spiritual ancestors, Knox and Calvin, who had a faculty of logic far in advance of his, and see what a semblance of horror and wickedness the God-idea takes in *their* consistent and remorseless hands!

After a number of ignorant and arrogant deliverances on the inspirations of poetry, art, and literature, on none of which is he in the least degree qualified to speak, Mr. Parker ends his first pamphlet with an allegation which he and every one of his backers must have known to be untrue:

"And, to conclude, if Atheism be true, its professors should be prepared to teach it. . . . . Let Mr. Bradlaugh evangelise the masses; let Mr. John Morley" [are *his* beneficent aspirations paralysed?] "proclaim his refined Agnosticism among the cultured. Perhaps it is to their credit *that they shrink from the task*, although it does not say much for their courage or their consistency."

It is a pity that the selected defenders of Revealed Religion cannot speak the truth; that such backers as Mr. Parker's should support him in such a flagrant falsehood as this. Mr. Bradlaugh all his life was evangelising the masses; he converted a thousand thinking men to Atheism for every one that Mr. Parker will ever convert back again. His propagandist activity was open and notorious; he was President of an organisation which evangelises the masses. He was illegally kept out of Parliament for five years because of his "courage and consistency".

"Are they prepared," Mr. Parker next asks the Atheists, "to set up Atheistic Sunday Schools?" They have done so, in many cases; though most Atheists hold that Sunday Schools of any sort are a mistake, and will be satisfied to *keep Theism out of the public schools*. When they attain that, alas for the Parkers! *Their* occupation

will be gone. They may still ask silly questions, such as whether Atheists "go to the dying and preach their ghastly gospel of despair". No. Preaching to dying and unheeding ears is work for the Parkers, who have little to say that living ears need listen to; and they may, if they please, pretend to think that all the dying will meet all their friends in heaven, though their "revelation" solemnly says they will not. Atheists let people die in peace: their preaching is for the living. To fool the dying is occupation for priests, not for Atheists, for whom there is no despair in feeling that rest is rest indeed.

People like Mr. Parker sometimes accuse Atheists of indifference to the spread of their own opinions, on the score that they have not endowed Atheistic institutions. Whose fault is that? If an Atheist leaves money to endow Atheistic propaganda the Christian law confiscates it. This wickedness is wrought in the name of God and Jesus, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, after eighteen hundred years of the "light of revelation"—revised revelation, always subsisting on money endowments, and plenty of them. And Mr. Parker assures us that Christianity is doing so much good! Let it abandon brigandage, and we shall be prepared to argue the point.

VII.

I have said that Mr. Parker's reasoning, praised as it is by leading clerics, seems to me that of a clergyman standing about the average in everything but sourness. But when I go a second time through his second pamphlet, entitled "The Difficulties involved in the Denial of a Revelation", I feel that I went too far. It seems to me quite the feeblest piece of sophistry I ever read, in the way of Christian Evidences. It sounds incredible, but it is the fact, that Mr. Parker *offers no argument in favor of Christian Revelation at all.* What he does is to suggest reasons for supposing that *all* religions alike *may* be "revealed", that "God" would not leave his creatures without knowledge of him, and that "inspiration" may subsist to this day. Here are a few of his deliverances:

"Revelation .... is to the spiritual part of man what light

is to the natural eye." "It is incredible" that God "should be in . . . . immediate proximity to so many millions of souls and never suggest to any one of them thoughts concerning Himself and His relationship to the human race." "If even in the stammering utterances of the heathen world we discern some trace of divine interposition, ... it becomes more difficult still to resist the evidence for Revelation when we turn to the utterances of the Hebrew Prophets, and of Christ and His Apostles." "The teachings of Scripture and the religious conceptions of all nations involve Revelation *in some form or* other . . . ." "There is to us nothing *Unnatural* in . . . . special inspiration. It is you, we retort upon the Atheist, who are Unnatural. You have lost your spiritual sense—your spiritual vision. Plato would pity you; the old Aryans would wonder at your dulness . . . ." The denial of Revelation "impugns the character of God. *Could He leave His children in the dark or allow them to be deceived by vain hopes and fears?*"

Now see what all this leads to. A good "God", it is argued, *must* reveal himself: he could not "leave his children in the dark". Then what becomes of the "stammering utterances of the heathen world"? Why stammering? Had "God" after all left the heathen "in the dark", or allowed them to be "deceived by vain hopes and fears"? Was their revelation not as true as the other paternal disclosures? On Mr. Parker's premises, it was. Either "God" *did* keep millions in the dark, or he told them all the truth. The former view would "impugn the character of God", and we must not do that; so the second must be right, if there is anything in logic.

But see now what *this* leads us to. *All* revelations having alike come from "God", what becomes of the claims of Judaism and Christianity? These in turn claimed from the first to be the *only* revelations from God: the Old Testament finally proclaims all other religions to be false (though it is clear that the earlier Hebrews believed in the Gods of their neighbours), and the New Testament proclaims Jesus the only Saviour. Then "God" *did* keep billions of his children in the dark, and does so to this hour, bringing them up in the "vain hopes and fears" of Islam, of Hinduism, of Buddhism, and all the rest of it! Either Christianity is *the* true religion or it is not. If it is not, what is Mr. Parker paid for? Does he think his countrymen will long continue to tax themselves to support such medicine-men as he after it becomes an open secret that Christianity is just a religion like another? If

all religions are "revealed", why not try Buddhism? Or why not try Muhammadanism, which is a later revelation than Christianity, and claims to correct it? Mr. Parker has got himself into one more logical mess. He can find no arguments for Revelation save those on which he founds his Theism; and these afford no foothold whatever for Christianity, which is the express negation of the fatherhood and impartiality of "God". Mr. Parker's ancestors knew much better what they were about. For them it was heaven for the believing Christians (and not too many of them), and hell for everybody else. Let Mr. Parker look out, or the heresy-hunters will be upon him.

But this is not all. Mr. Parker's argument involves the *continuity* of inspiration and revelation; and he expressly says "we feel that . . . . if it pleases God, we too might speak as did the Prophets and Apostles". Quite so. But on Mr. Parker's own showing God *must* please. He cannot keep us in the dark; and if, as Mr. Parker implies, revelation is an affair of stages, in which Christianity was one, there must be new stages. The first Christians thought the world was coming to an end, but it didn't. We have gone a long way ahead since then, and we need, on Mr. Parker's principles, new revelations to suit our new problems. But here lies the rub. If a good "God" cannot leave his children in the dark, clearly he reveals himself to all. Now, Mr. Parker teaches that a thousand contradictory and irreconcilable creeds are all revealed. Then why draw the line at the Atheists? To this complexion it must come: *if all beliefs are "revelation", then unbelief is "revelation" also.*

This will trouble Mr. Parker, of course, but there is no help for him. He is always trying to make out that his "God" rules everything; and yet with childish inconsistency he is always deciding that "He" does not rule the Atheists. "God" inspired Isaiah, and Jesus, and Paul, and Muhammad, but not Voltaire and Paine, or at least not Clifford and Bradlaugh. These last are exceptions to the reign of Omnipotence. Now, Mr. Parker may make as many foolish assertions as he pleases, but the most credulous of us, if we have the faculty of reasoning at all, cannot believe him in both terms of a contradiction. If "God" is always revealing himself, "He" is revealing "Himself" to *me* when he makes it impossible for me to

believe what Mr. Parker says of "Him", or to believe the Christian religion, or to believe that the Infinite Universe was made out of nothing by an Infinite and Eternal Male Person, who later on turned out to consist of Himself, His Son, no Wife or Mother, and a Ghost. I take Mr. Parker, for argument's sake, on his own ground. He says there is "nothing unnatural" in special inspiration. So be it. Then special inspiration will just be special intellectuality. To this I shall make no demur: I humbly think I have a better intelligence than Mr. Parker: and Mr. Parker, if he will be consistent, dare not blame me for thinking so. I say I have not lost my spiritual sense; and it expresses itself in the foregoing confutation of Mr. Parker's follies and fallacies. How on earth can Mr. Parker pretend to know that I am not inspired? How can he deny that my argument is "revelation"?

Thus, on the one line as on the other, Mr. Parker falls into the pit he himself has digged. Seeking to prove the existence of his "God", he showed that one "God" is just as well proved as another, that Jupiter is as true as Jehovah, and Osiris as Jesus. That is to say, they are all delusions alike, for his own creed excludes all guesses but one, and that one rests on no better foundation than the rest. So, in trying to prove Revelation, he only makes out that all religions are alike revealed, and, by consequence, that Unbelief in them all is matter of Revelation also. So that the word Revelation in his hands loses all significance whatsoever. If all beliefs are revealed, revelation just means opinion, and the former term becomes a useless addendum, as who should say, "human man". And the pretensions of Christianity are quashed by its own defender.

It is idle for Mr. Parker to fall back on the plea that "Revelation may be corrupted and its teachings forgotten", and that men "change the truth of God into a lie". That would mean that "God", in Mr. Parker's own words, *allows* "His" children to be deceived by vain hopes and fears, which Mr. Parker says "God" cannot do. Mr. Parker has once more closed the door against himself. If men can change the truth of God into a lie, where is the security that Mr. Parker has not done so? I, for one, am satisfied that he has not got *the* truth; "God's" truth I don't trouble myself about. Equally idle is it to say that

certain teachings are "worthy of God"? Are not all religions "revealed", and must they not then all be "worthy of God"? This dialectician cannot walk a yard without tripping himself up. "Would even Agnostics assert," he asks, "that their Altruism . . . . would have been possible or conceivable, but for the prior development of the human mind by Christianity?" Why, there *was* Altruism, and much of it, before Christianity was heard of! But supposing it were not so, to what a plight does Mr. Parker again reduce himself! Christianity, in turn, was only possible after a period of blood sacrifices, idolatry and polytheism. Then does that make these right for Christians to-day? Unhappy Mr. Parker!

It grows tedious, this arguing with a man who cannot manage his weapons. And yet this blunderer, who can never handle the knives of logic without cutting himself, figures as an approved representative of British Christianity, certificated by leading men in the leading Churches. The fact speaks volumes as to the condition alike of popular and clerical culture among us. The half-educated pulpit sophist lives on a quarter-educated public, who cannot see through or over his cheap dialectic. Let us grant him sincere: it is a comfort to feel that we need not add dissimulation to the list of his imperfections, which includes a fair share of pious malevolence. But if there be any use in Board Schools, I take it that some proportion of his readers can see the worthlessness of his doctrine when it is shown to them. "Destroy the Christian Religion," says our sophist, "if that were possible, and another would rise in its place immediately." Yes, yet awhile. The darkness and delusion of eighteen Christian centuries are not to be dispelled in one. But the dawn has come.

> And not by eastern windows only,
> When daylight comes, comes in the light,
> In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
> But westward, look, the land is bright.

There is even a glimmer about Mr. Parker—at least there is darkness visible.

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